W. E. Gladstone

DUPLICATE

St. Deiniol's Library
Hawarden, Clwyd
Founded by
The Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone

34.2
/19

E. 65
C. 22

ST. DEINIOL'S LIBRARY,
HAWARDEN.

THE

DIRECTORIUM ASCETICUM;

OR,

GUIDE TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

BY

JOHN BAPTIST SCARAMELLI, S.J.

WITH PREFACE

BY

HIS EMINENCE THE MOST REV.

CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP MANNING.

Seventh Edition.

S. DEINIOL'S LIBRARY,
HAWARDEN.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

R. & T. WASHBOURNE, LTD.,
PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.
AND AT BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER AND GLASGOW.
1917

ST. DEINIOL'S LIBRARY,
HAWARDEN.

CONTENTS OF VOL. IV.

TREATISE THE FOURTH.

OF THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION, WHICH CONSISTS IN THE THREE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES, BUT ESPECIALLY IN CHARITY.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION, ... 1

ARTICLE I.

ON THEOLOGICAL FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

WHEREIN CONSISTS THE VIRTUE OF THEOLOGICAL FAITH, . . 3

CHAPTER II.

PROPERTIES OF THE VIRTUE OF FAITH, ... 13

CHAPTER III.

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH FOR SALVATION AND FOR CHRISTIAN PERFECTION, ... 19

CHAPTER IV.

MEANS OF ACQUIRING PERFECT FAITH, SO NECESSARY FOR PROGRESS IN PERFECTION, ... 26

PAGE

CHAPTER V.

VARIOUS METHODS OF PRACTISING THE VIRTUE OF FAITH, . . 31

CHAPTER VI.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE, 38

ARTICLE II.

ON THE VIRTUE OF THEOLOGICAL HOPE.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEFINITION OF THEOLOGICAL HOPE, ... 43

CHAPTER II.

ON WHAT MOTIVES OUR HOPE SHOULD BE BASED, . . . 50

CHAPTER III.

THE PROPERTIES OF THIS THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE, . . . 55

CHAPTER IV.

THE THIRD PROPERTY OF HOPE, ... 62

CHAPTER V.

THE EFFECTS PRODUCED IN THE SOUL BY HOPE, . . . 64

CHAPTER VI.

A FURTHER RESULT OF SUPERNATURAL HOPE, . . . 70

CHAPTER VII.

THE OCCASIONS WHICH SPECIALLY CALL FOR THE PRACTICE OF HOPE, 75

CHAPTER VIII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE, 82

PAGE

ARTICLE III.

ON THE LOVE OF GOD.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHAT THE LOVE OF CHARITY FOR GOD CONSISTS, AND IN WHAT IT IS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE LOVE OF CONCUPISCENCE, . 89

CHAPTER II.

CERTAIN QUALITIES OF CHARITY TOWARDS GOD, . . . 96

CHAPTER III.

CERTAIN MEANS FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF DIVINE LOVE, . 104

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTICULAR ACTS OF LOVE WE OUGHT TO PRACTISE IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE DIVINE LOVE. EXPLANATION OF THE FIRST ACT, NAMELY, THE LOVE OF COMPLACENCY, ... 116

CHAPTER V.

EXPLANATION OF THE LOVE OF PREFERENCE, OR THE APPRECIATIVE LOVE OF GOD, ... 121

CHAPTER VI.

EXPLANATION OF THE LOVE OF BENEVOLENCE FOR GOD, . . 127

CHAPTER VII.

THE SORROWING LOVE OF CONTRITION, ... 136

CHAPTER VIII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE, 140

ARTICLE IV.

ON THE LOVE OF CONFORMITY.

CHAPTER I.

THAT CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD IN EVERYTHING REQUIRED OF US, IS THE CHIEF ACT OF DIVINE CHARITY, . . . 148

PAGE

CHAPTER II.

THE GROUNDS OF THIS CONFORMITY, ... 155

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST MOTIVE OF CONFORMITY TO THE DIVINE WILL. GOD HAS INFINITE CLAIMS UPON OUR SUBMISSION, . . . 161

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW MOTIVES OF SELF-INTEREST MOVING US TO ENTIRE CONFORMITY WITH THE WILL OF GOD, ... 169

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER MOTIVE OF SELF-INTEREST—CONFORMITY TO THE DIVINE WILL CONSTITUTES THE HAPPINESS OF OUR PRESENT LIFE, . 178

CHAPTER VI.

CERTAIN PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE FOREGOING MAXIMS, . 183

CHAPTER VII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE, 189

ARTICLE V.

CHAPTER I.

EXPLANATION OF THE COMMANDMENT TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOUR. CONSIDERATION OF THE CHARACTER OF THIS COMMANDMENT, WITH A VIEW TO STIR UP OUR AFFECTION TOWARDS IT, . 195

CHAPTER II.

THAT LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR IS A VIRTUE WHICH ENSURES OUR EVERLASTING SALVATION, ... 205

CHAPTER III.

THE ACTS OF CHARITY WE SHOULD PRACTISE TOWARDS PARTICULAR INDIVIDUALS: AND, FIRST, TOWARDS OUR ENEMIES, . . 210

CHAPTER IV.

CERTAIN DEGREES OF PERFECTION IN THE LOVE OF OUR ENEMIES, . 219

PAGE

CHAPTER V.

OF CHARITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOURS IN ALMSDEEDS AND OTHER CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY, ... 228

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY WHICH SHOULD BE PRACTISED TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR WITH A VIEW TO HIS SALVATION, . 240

CHAPTER VII.

THAT FRATERNAL CORRECTION IS A SPIRITUAL WORK OF MERCY: HOW IT IS TO BE PRACTISED, ... 246

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT CHARITY SOLICITOUS FOR THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF OTHERS, IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF PRIESTS, AND ESPECIALLY OF SUCH AS HAVE CARE OF SOULS, ... 258

CHAPTER IX.

A SHORT AND PRACTICAL COMPENDIUM OF ALL THAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THIS ASCETIC GUIDE FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF DIRECTORS, ... 26[illegible]

SKELETONS OF SERMONS.

SERMONS FOR SUNDAYS, ... 269, 311
SERMONS FOR FEASTS OF OUR LADY AND OF THE SAINTS, . . 342

INDEX 385

GUIDE TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

TREATISE FOURTH.

OF THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION, WHICH CONSISTS IN THE THREE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES, BUT ESPECIALLY IN CHARITY.

INTRODUCTION.

1. After three days of travelling, we are now nearing our journey's end. The consummation of Christian life is perfect Charity. The removal of obstacles, spoken of in the Second Treatise; the perfection of the Moral Virtues, which was the subject-matter of the Third Treatise; the means of uprooting obstacles, and implanting virtues within the soul, discoursed of at full length in the First Treatise; are but so many paths leading to the most desirable goal of divine love: and having, by the blessing of God, completed these three Treatises, which may be compared to so many stages of our journey, we are now about to treat of perfect Charity, the consummation, essence, and very substance of Christian perfection, since by it alone we are fully united with God, our last end, and highest happiness; by it alone does our spirit attain its rest in Him as in its sphere, and in Him repose as in its centre.

2. But as Christian perfection consists also, to some extent, in the virtues of Faith and Hope both because they connect us

immediately, through our understanding and will, with our last end, albeit by different acts, and also because they are the inseparable companions of Charity —for it is impossible to love God, unless His infinite goodness be made manifest to us by Faith, and unless we look to Him for the help needed to enable us to love Him —it will be necessary for us to discourse of these two virtues. And so much the more, because the title of Theological Virtues belongs to them as well as to Charity, and because they both have God for the immediate object of their acts, a privilege to which none of the Moral Virtues can lay claim.

3. Having thus set forth in the foregoing Treatises all that concerns the Instrumental Perfection of the Christian, in the present Volume I mean to speak of this same perfection in its essence, which, as I have so often remarked, (following the teaching of the Angelic Doctor,) consists primarily in love of God, and secondarily in love of our neighbour. But as Faith and Hope may be said to belong, in a certain sense, to the essence of our perfection, I will start with a speculative and practical treatment of these two virtues.

S. DEINIOL'S LIBRARY,

ARTICLE I.

On Theological Faith.

CHAPTER I.

WHEREIN CONSISTS THE VIRTUE OF THEOLOGICAL FAITH.

4. The Apostle of the Gentiles has bequeathed to us so beautiful a description of Theological Faith, that by fixing our attention upon his words, we shall easily understand its nature. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.** In this sentence, as in a masterly and accurate sketch, the Angelic Doctor traces all the essential features of this virtue. By the words, *Faith is the substance of things hoped for*, St Thomas says we are to understand that Faith is the foundation of our hopes, and that it is the starting-point of our possession of those unspeakable blessings after which we all yearn, it being obvious that no good is hoped for unless we believe it to exist, nor is any attained unless we hope for it.† The closing words, *Faith is the evidence of things unseen*, St Thomas interprets to mean that firm adhesion of the mind by which Faith, convinced by the unerring authority of the divine word, gives its assent to truths unseen.‡

* Fides est sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium. Ad Heb. xj. 1.

† Dicitur fides esse substantia rerum sperandarum : quia scilicet prima inchoatio rerum sperandarum in nobis est per assensum fidei, quæ virtute continet omnes res sperandas. 2, 2, quæst. 4, art. 1, in corp.

‡ Ipsa firma adhæsio intellectûs ad veritatem fidei non apparentem, vocatur hic argumentum. Unde alia littera habet, convictio ; quia scilicet per auctoritatem divinam intellectus credentis convincitur ad assentiendum his quæ non videt.

The same holy Doctor shows the definition of Faith given by St Augustine to be identical with that of St Paul;* as is also the definition given by St John Damascene;† as well as the divers explanations whereby divines seek to set forth the essence of this sublime virtue. But as we have to suit ourselves to the capacity of each and every one who may read this page, we will reduce these several definitions to the most homely and intelligible terms possible; and we say that supernatural and divine faith is a theological virtue which lifts up our minds to a firm belief of all that God has revealed, on account of the sole motive of its having been revealed by the God of boundless wisdom and truth. We will weigh each of these words, so that the nature of a virtue so essential to Christian life may be made plain to minds untrained in theological science.

5. We have said that faith is a theological virtue; for we are dealing with a virtue which, whether we are sleeping or waking, abides firmly and fixedly in our souls, which is a habit infused into us together with sanctifying grace by God, and which can never decay nor be lost until we commit some sin of unfaithfulness contrary to this virtue. Thus, since it is an enduring habit, which disposes the soul to acts of firm belief, it is justly called a virtue. We have said, too, that it is a theological virtue, because the acts of faith we are enabled to produce by this habit, have for their immediate object God Himself, and His attributes of wisdom and truth, which are the motives that form the basis of these acts and that determine us to render to God the homage due to Him as the first and infallible Truth.

6. I say that this virtue raises our minds to believe; but with all the striving of our free will, we could never reach the level of an act of divine faith, which presupposes as its indispensable preliminary the assistance of God's grace to enlighten our minds, to stir up our wills, and to lift us up to the level of an act so far above their strength. So true is this, that when the Pelagians taught that, by our unaided natural powers, we were able to attain to some beginning or first movement of faith, or, at least, that we

* Fides est virtus, quâ creduntur quæ non videntur. Tract. 40, In Joan.

† Fides est non inquisitivus consensus. Lib. iv., cap. 12.

were capable of some aspiration or desire, whereby we might merit to be raised to a perfect faith, their opinion was rejected by the Holy Fathers, especially by St Augustine,* who took his stand on the words of St Paul: *We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.*† And at length it was branded as heretical by several Councils, especially those of Orange and of Trent.

7. I further say that this virtue raises our minds to the belief of all that God has revealed. Let us pause awhile here, and for the better understanding of what I am now saying, and shall hereafter say, we will distinguish, with theologians, between the grounds of credibility and the motives of faith. The former are certain reasons which prove to a moral certainty the fact that the doctrines proposed by Holy Church to our belief have been revealed by God, and on that account claim our assent. But these reasons do not suffice to constitute an act of faith, both because, although convinced that certain truths have been revealed by God, I may be so blinded by some passion or other as to refuse them credence—as is the case with those heretics, who, though convinced of the truth of some Catholic doctrine, persevere in their unbelief, either from motives of interest or pride, or for some other private end—and also because, in order to make an act of Theological Faith concerning truths the credibility of which I have discovered by means of the arguments mentioned above, it is necessary to found my conviction upon the motives proper to this Theological Virtue or Faith, which we will now briefly explain.

8. I begin by setting forth the reasons establishing that the truths proposed by Holy Church have been revealed by God. Seven may be assigned, which are figured by the seven seals mentioned by St John in his Apocalypse.‡ The first proof is drawn from prophecy. To foresee future events which depend on the will of God, and the free choice of human agents, and to

* De Prædest., cap. 2.

† Profecto non sumus idonei credere aliquid a nobis, quasi ex nobis: sed sufficientia nostra, qua credere incipimus, ex Deo est.

‡ Cap. 5.

foretell them several years before they come to pass, is possible only to a divine power. Now we find in the Holy Scriptures, that the Prophets have foreseen and predicted, even in their minutest circumstances, the several facts of the Life and Passion of our Redeemer. Hence, it was God Himself Who discovered these events to the Prophets, and Who spoke by their mouth when they uttered their predictions. But if so, the Faith for which God deigned to make known His will must needs be founded on truth. The next argument is the holiness of the Christian law, in the obligations it imposes, in the means it offers for the fulfilment of these duties, in the effects wrought by the law on those who observe it faithfully. God being the source and well-spring of all holiness, a law which in its every part breathes nothing but holiness and righteousness, must of necessity come from Him. The life of a single saint would be alone sufficient to prove the holiness of the law and religion which he professes. What a demonstration, then, have we not in those thousands who, after a searching inquiry, have been recognised as holy on account of their strict observance of the Catholic law, and their close adhesion to the Catholic faith! A third argument is to be found in the eminent wisdom which distinguished the Doctors of Holy Church; and the more closely these have examined the foundations of our religion, the more firm have they discovered them to be. It is quite otherwise with sects, the faith of the promoters and founders of which is all the weaker because they are themselves aware of the hollowness of their system, and spread its false doctrines for merely human, nay, sometimes, indeed, for wicked ends.

9. The fourth proof is the wondrous propagation of our religion, which, when it had to stand its ground against a world-wide and deeply-rooted idolatry, to which it opposed a teaching so contradictory to our unruly senses, and so much at variance with the instincts of our corrupt nature, yet, in a short time, supplanted Paganism. And what shows more plainly the hand of God is, that this triumph was won by a few ignorant, despised fishermen, hated and harried on all sides, who refuted sages, overcame statecraft, and waged a truceless warfare with the rulers of the world. A fifth argument is to be found in miracles, of which God alone can

be the author. We meet with countless instances of prodigies, performed in all times and in all places, by persons of virtuous and irreproachable life, in order to bear witness to the holiness of our Faith. We must needs, then, infer that men of whom God has been so frequently pleased to make use when He has willed to suspend the most constant and unchangeable laws of nature, were very dear to Him, and that the religion in proof of which they wrought these prodigies is truly divine. The sixth proof is drawn from the countless army of martyrs, many of whom were illustrious for their birth and station, of tender or decrepit age feeble from being of the weaker sex or, at least, from having been reared in delicacy and luxury. This proof gains strength from the great joy with which they bore the most frightful torments, and the charity towards God and their neighbour which enabled them to endure all their sufferings. But the cogency of the proof is very much increased by the prodigies which happened when Christian heroes, though cast into raging furnaces, or into cauldrons of boiling oil or pitch, becameunassailable to the ardour of the flames; or when, being exposed in the amphitheatres, they remained unscathed by the teeth and claws of ferocious beasts. And what is still more wondrous, the fearful pains which the martyrs underwent, far from striking dread into the hearts of the idolaters, and deterring them from becoming Christians, served as a strong attraction which impelled them to embrace our holy religion, even at the cost of their life-blood. The seventh argument is the unshaken constancy of the Church's faith, which, amid so many assaults of foes without, and of rebels within, has never swerved nor changed a hair's-breadth. Amid countless conflicts, attacks and storms, the Church of Christ remains ever the same in its dogmas, discipline and worship. Gradual decay is the lot of all human institutions. Kingdoms crumble, empires decline, or gradually fall into decadence, and disappear with the lapse of time; false sects and heresies in their turn imperceptibly lose credit with their adherents, and leave at length nothing behind them but the unhappy memory of their pestilential errors. Even idolatry, which seated itself arrogantly on the thrones of kings and emperors, is now wholly past and gone.

Not so the Christian religion, which, after many centuries, remains what it was in its beginning, and by its enduring constancy shows itself to be the handiwork of God, Who is unchangeable, and knows no vicissitude.

10. These reasons are so plain and obvious, that any one of them might of itself suffice to convince the most rebellious understanding, and bring it to own that the laws proposed by the Catholic Church for our observance have God for their Author, and that its teachings are truths revealed by Him. How far more powerfully, then, will they not avail when all these proofs are massed together, to bring home to our minds certainty and conviction! St John Damascene, though brought up in Judaism, reflecting in his heart on these most weighty arguments, was forced to acknowledge, without any one leading him to this persuasion, that our religion is the only true one, and that its teachings cannot but be divine; and he embraced it with such earnestness that he soon became the great saint we now venerate on our altars.

11. Yet these several reasons or motives of credibility, certain and obvious though they be, are not a sufficient groundwork for an act of Theological Faith, but are only a preparation thereunto, since they establish no more than that the truths of the Catholic religion have been revealed by God, and that, as a consequence, we ought to believe them. But to hold that I ought to believe certain truths is not an act of faith, but an obvious inference which predisposes the mind to elicit an act of belief in such and such truths. The act of Divine Faith implies that, after attaining, by means of the weighty arguments hitherto alleged, the persuasion that the teachings of Holy Church have been revealed by God, we believe them for the sole reason that they have been revealed to us by a God Who, being all-wise, cannot be deceived as to that which He knows, and Who, being sovereignly true, cannot deceive us in what He says. This is brought about by command of the will, which efficaciously bids the understanding to give a firm assent to these Catholic truths, as a homage to the sovereign wisdom and truthfulness of Him who has been pleased to reveal them to us.

12. As St James says, *The devils believe and tremble.** Yet, by believing, these rebel spirits do not make an act of Theological Faith; for, as St Thomas teaches, they believe not in consequence of a willing and spontaneous submission of their understanding to the word of the all-wise and truthful God, Who cannot err in His utterances, but solely on account of the many obvious signs which clearly bring home to them that the teachings of Holy Church are from God.† Hence, continues the Saint, their faith is not the act of a will bending before the first and infallible truth and, therefore, an act worthy of praise; but it is a merely necessary act of the mind, constrained to believe by the evidence of signs and arguments.‡ Nor is this belief of theirs, adds St Thomas, a gift of grace binding them in lowly subjection to heaven-born truth, but it is compelled by the natural penetration of their intellect.§ In a word, we may conclude with the Apostle, that faith is an assent of the mind to truth, not because we learn it from men, or because it is made manifest by signs, but because it is revealed by the all-wise and truthful God.‖

13. Thus may the reader perceive that the arguments we have just developed are motives, not of Theological Faith, but of the credibility of Faith; in other words, such proofs serve to convince us that what the Church teaches is truly revealed by God; but they are not the motives for which we actually believe such doctrines. The motives which determine our belief are solely the revelation of them to Holy Church by the God of infinite wisdom and truth. These motives impart to the act of faith two most precious qualities. First, they render it certain and in-

* Dæmones credunt, et contremiscunt. Jacob. v. 19.

† Vident enim multa manifesta indicia, ex quibus percipiunt doctrinam ecclesiæ a Deo esse. 2, 2, quæst. 5, art. 3, in corp.

‡ Dæmonum fides, est quodammodo coacta ex signo cum evidentiâ. Et ideo non pertinet ad laudem voluntatis ipsorum, quod credunt. In Respon. ad 1.

§ Unde fides, quæ est in dæmonibus, non est donum gratiæ, sed magis coguntur ad credendum ex perspicacitate naturalis intellectûs. In Respon. ad. 2.

‖ Quoniam cum accepissetis a nobis verbum auditûs Dei, accepistis illud non ut verbum hominum, sed (sicut vere est) ut verbum Dei, qui operatur in vobis, qui credidistis. I. ad Thessal. ii. 13.

fallible; for, as the utterance of God, Who cannot misapprehend what He conceives in His mind, on account of His wisdom, and, since He is very truth, cannot depart in His sayings from that which He has in His mind, must surely be infallibly true, so the faith of one who assents to such sayings must be equally true and infallible. Secondly, these motives render our belief most meritorious, inasmuch as by blindly submitting our understanding to the word of a God infinitely wise and truthful, we acknowledge Him for what He is, to wit, the first and infallible Truth, and make to Him the offering of the noblest of our faculties, I mean the mind, sacrificing in His honour our own private judgment. And God, on His part, in reward of such subjection, promises us everlasting bliss, and, in recompense for our believing darkly in Him here below, will grant us to enjoy His presence unveiled, face to face, in heaven.

14. Let us now take the practical side of what we have hitherto been explaining. He who would exercise acts of divine faith should begin by giving his attentive consideration to the motives of credibility (in case, that is, he has not done so already), until he be firmly convinced and persuaded that the articles proposed to our belief by the Church are not the inventions of man, but the oracles of God. But we must not confine ourselves to the assent to these articles solely on the ground of their credibility; as, for example, because they have been acknowledged to be true by the Doctors of the Church, or have been confirmed by the miracles of the saints, and attested by the blood of the martyrs, or are admitted by the faithful among whom we live. For such faith—as we have said with St Thomas—would differ in nothing from the natural and constrained belief of the very devils themselves. But we must go further, and admit these same articles because they have been manifested to the Church by a God Whose infinite wisdom precludes error, and Whose sovereign truth renders it impossible that He should deceive in His words. Further, we must protest that, in defence of truths thus warranted by the divine word, we are ready to lay down even our life, aye, and a thousand lives if we had them. Such is the faith which St Augustine deems far more precious than riches, treasures, and

all the honours and wealth of this world.* And the Saint assigns as the reason, that this faith it is which justifies sinners, gives light to the blind, health to the ailing, baptism to the catechumens; this it is which justifies the faithful, restores penitents to grace, perfects the just, and crowns martyrs.†

15. Full well did that most illustrious king of France, St Louis, know the advantages accruing to the soul from faith.‡ He generally resided at Poissy, where he had received the gift of faith by holy baptism; and he used to say, that in his vast kingdom no place was so illustrious, in none had he received so great an honour, as in this obscure village. On one occasion, when it was suggested to him by some of his courtiers that he had been more highly honoured in the city of Rheims, where he had been crowned king of France, "Nay," replied the wise king, "I glory more in Poissy, where I have received the faith, than in Rheims, where I received my crown and empire."

16. Nor did the glorious Prince of Carinthia, by name Hugh, form a lower estimate of this virtue;§ for having provided a sumptuous banquet for the principal nobles of his state, who were all of illustrious birth, yet idolaters in religion, he gave secret orders that as many Catholics of low rank as there were nobles should be invited to take part in the festivity. At the appointed hour, the Prince made his barons sit below the dais, and placed before them coarse and ill-cooked dishes. He then invited his humble friends to sit at his own table, apart from the rest, where he feasted them with choice wines and dainties. The noblemen were fired with indignation at this preference, which they resented as a slight on the nobility of their blood, nor could they refrain from carrying complaints before their sovereign. The Prince replied that they ought not to wonder at his having shown

* Nullæ sunt majores divitiæ, nulli thesauri, nulli honores, nulla mundi hujus major substantia, quam est fides catholica.

† Hæc peccatores homines salvat, caecos illuminat, infirmos curat, catechumenos baptizat, fideles justificat, pœnitentes reparat, justos augmentat, martyres coronat. Serm. 1, De Verb. Apost.

‡ Nic. Egidi, Petrus Mattei, et Franciscus Belforesti. In Vitâ S. Ludovici Regis.

§ Sabelli, lib. iij., Eneas Silvius, cap. 20. Europa, Anno 790.

such an honourable preference to those who, though of ignoble birth, were far more illustrious and honourable than the lords of the realm, since they had received in holy baptism the gift of faith. All this is in harmony with what has been quoted from St Augustine, namely, that the virtue of faith is to be held in higher account than all earthly riches or dignities whatsoever.

17. It must further be borne in mind that the habit of faith, of which we are treating, may be either united with or separated from charity. In the former case, it is called a living faith (*fides formata*), in the latter, it is dead (*fides informis*). St Thomas gives the reason. He says that charity is a divine, quickening principle, which, being joined to faith, adorns and completes it.* For we suppose it to be known that, although whenever we lose sanctifying grace by mortal sin, every habit of infused virtue is lost together with the favour of God; yet the habits of faith and hope are not always lost, since they have the singular privilege of abiding in their entirety, unless the sinful act be diametrically opposed to them, as are the sins of infidelity and despair. Whenever, therefore, the habit of faith is accompanied by the habit of grace and charity, it is called *formed*, which means that it is enhanced by the beauty of so noble a *form*. If it be detached from grace and charity by reason of some grievous sin, unless the sin be against faith, it is said to be *deformed*, that is, it is stripped of so beauteous a *form*. We must also observe, that our faith is lively if it be effectual and urge us to follow out in practice what the truths we believe require of us; but it is a dead faith if languid, and ineffectual for works conformable with the maxims of our belief. More of this, however, in the fourth Chapter. For the present it will suffice to say, that the faith which imparts justice and perfection to the soul is that which charity accompanies, and which, by means of charity and other infused virtues, does great things for God's service; as St Paul remarks.† And St Gregory confirms the observation by saying that he truly believes who practises what he believes.‡

* Caritas dicitur forma fidei, in quantum per caritatem actus fidei perficitur, et formatur. 2, 2, quæst. 4, art. 3.

† Fides quæ per caritatem operatur. Ad Galat. v. 6.

‡ Ille vere credit, qui exercet operando quod credit. Hom. 29, in Evang.

CHAPTER II.

PROPERTIES OF THE VIRTUE OF FAITH.

18. HAVING thus determined the essence of Theological Faith, we now pass on to certain of its properties, apart from which it could not subsist. For virtues, like physical existences, cannot endure without certain qualities which are proper to them; or at least could only subsist without them in a state which would be continual violence to their nature. The first quality of faith is simplicity; in other words, it must not search curiously into the reasons on which its assent to Catholic truth is based, but after having attained the certainty that God has spoken, it should rest solely on the irrefragable authority of the divine word, inasmuch as the mysteries of our creed far transcend the capacity of our weak minds; for as St Augustine aptly observes, the stability of our faith comes not from the acuteness of our understanding, but from the simplicity of our adhesion to God's utterance.* Our knowledge of things—whether it be scientific or only probable—depends on natural reason and its exercise; but meritorious faith is the result of lowly submission of mind to the authority of Him Who reveals.† Nay, St Gregory lays down the principle, that our faith would be devoid of merit did it move us to believe by the cogency of human arguments or sensible experience instead of divine revelation, as it would thus be a human, not a divine faith.‡ None, then, may deem it imprudent or blameworthy to believe blindly without insight into what we believe, and for the sole reason that it is revealed of God; rather should we hold for certain that this blind, unquestioning belief is that

* Turbam non intelligendi vivacitas, sed credendi simplicitas tutissimam reddit. Contra Epist. Manich. quæ dicitur Fundamenti, cap. 4.

† Quod intelligimus aliquid, rationi debemus; quod autem credimus, auctoritati. De Util. Cred. contra Manich., cap. 11.

‡ Nec fides habet meritum, cui humana ratio præbet experimentum. Hom. 26, in Evang.

wherein true faith consists, and that it will gain a great reward. Of this Clement of Alexandria assures us.*

19. The Holy Scriptures set forth two striking examples of this simplicity of faith in the story of the great Patriarch Abraham. He was told by God that Sarah, his wife, should bear him a son in her decrepit old age. And though he was well-nigh a hundred years old, and his wife was of the advanced age of ninety, yet, as St Paul writes, without giving a thought to the fact that he had passed the age when he could beget a child, and that, moreover, his partner was barren, he bowed his head and believed the divine promise.†

20. Still more unmistakable was the proof given by the same holy Patriarch of his faith, when he was ordered by God to offer, as a whole burnt-offering, the only son bestowed on him in his old age. For without doubting for a moment the promise God had made him that there should be propagated, by means of this single offshoot, a race which should vie in numbers with the stars of the firmament and the sands of the sea-shore, he set at once about the task of putting the youth to death. He took him to the summit of a lofty mountain, prepared the altar, stretched his beloved son upon it, and having unsheathed his knife, was about to strike the fatal blow, in the firm assurance that from the cold ashes of the guileless boy a numerous race would arise to take possession of the land. Such is the unquestioning faith which no argument can cause to waver, but which, despite of every human reason to the contrary, rests steadfast on the most secure authority of God's promises. As St John Chrysostom observes, Abraham did not go on curiously peering into what might be the motive of such a command, as is the custom of many foolish Christians in regard of the things of God; nor did he seek to discover the advantage, or disadvantage, that might flow from so cruel a sacrifice, but

* Habet non tam veniam, quam præmium ignorare quod credas. Advers. Gentes.

† Et non infirmatus est fide, nec consideravit corpus suum emortuum, cum jam fere centum esset annorum, et emortuam vulvam Saræ; in repromissione enim Dei non hæsitavit diffidentia; sed confortatus est fide, dans gloriam Deo, plenissime sciens, quia quæcumque promisit, potens est et facere. Ad Rom. iv. 19

with unhesitating reliance on God's word, and without any questioning, he obeyed in all promptitude.* Happy we, could we but once attain the like faith!

21. The second property of faith is, that it be stable and waver not, but remain ever firm and constant in believing. This property results from the former. A Christian who seeks not curiously for natural reasons, nor attends to difficulties that may be suggested against the truths of revelation, but who elies solely on the word of the all-wise and all-truthful God, can hardly be otherwise than immovable in faith; for as the foundation on which he leans cannot be shaken, so must his faith be deep-rooted and unchangeable. St John Chrysostom compares faith to a stout staff which supports the failing and trembling limbs of a feeble old man, and stays him from stumbling and falling to the ground. Thus, too, does faith sustain our vacillating mind, and strengthen and steady it in believing, lest it fall into doubt, and be tossed about by sinful hesitation or perplexity.† Again, the Saint likens it to a light illuminating the soul which dwells in the darksome abode of this body, amid the mist of wavering and troubling thoughts, and saves it from every fault of doubt.‡ This fits in precisely with the language of the Prince of the Apostles, who compares the word of God to a beacon set in a dark place, which serves to insure the wayfarer against dangerous falls. For thus, amid the darkness of our minds, does the divine word like a light assure us of the truth, and confirm our belief, so that, if we keep our eyes fixed upon it,

* Videamus justi obedientiam, et quomodo fecit, quod a Domino imperatum est, non quærens causam, sicut multi insipientes faciunt, et de his quæ a Deo fiunt, curiose quærunt, et dicunt "Quare hoc, quare illud? Quæ hinc, quæ illinc utilitas nascitur?" sed sicut famulus diligens dominum, quæcumque præcepit implere studens, nihil ultra percunctans. Hom. 40, in Gen.

† Sicut enim membra tremula, et senectute languida, baculo tuto deducente, labi, et cadere non permittuntur; sic etiam animam nostram incertis ratiocinationibus circumactam, fides quovis baculo tutius sustentans, suâque vi reficiens summopere firmat. Hom. De Verb. Apost., "*Habentes eundem spiritum fidei*," etc.

‡ Non sinit subverti, infimas cogitationes corrigens præstantiâ suæ virtutis, et caliginem illam dispellens, animamque veluti in domicilio tenebroso inter tumultuantes cogitationes sedentem suo lumine illustrans. Ibid.

we shall never stumble or fall into the abominable crime of unbelief.*

22. Far be it from us, exclaims St Bernard on this point, to doubt or hesitate in matters of faith. Whatever faith teaches, has been firmly grounded upon, and sealed with, the certain truth of the infallible oracles of God, and should be received by us with an unshaken, fixed, and firm assent.† "Hast thou heard," says the mellifluous Doctor, to a certain heretic whom he was impugning, "what St Paul says of Faith? Hast thou heard that he calls it the *substance of things unseen?* This word *substance* implies a fixed and certain act, free from hesitation, which refuses to listen to cavil or discussion. It prevents thee fluctuating amid vain opinions, and restricts thee to a firm and stable assent. Faith is not a plausible opinion, but an unerring certainty."‡

23. In such firmness of faith did St Louis of France abide till his latest breath.§ For when about to receive the Holy Viaticum before dying, he was asked by the Priest whether he believed that the Son of God was contained within the narrow compass of that small Host, and collecting his fast-waning energies, he replied with great vigour of voice and tone, "I believe it as firmly as if, like the Apostles, I now beheld Jesus ascending in glory to Paradise." But a more heroic example may be met with in the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans: "I am certain that nothing in heaven or earth can *separate us from the love of Christ Jesus.*"‖ St Jerome, commenting on this passage, asks

* Habemus firmiorem propheticum sermonem, cui bene facitis attendentes, tamquam lucernæ lucenti in caliginoso loco. I. Pet. i. 19.

† Absit ut putemus in fide, vel in spe nostrâ aliquid, ut is putat, dubiâ æstimatione pendulum, et non magis totum, quod in eâ est, certâ, et solidâ veritate subnixum, oraculis et miraculis divinitus persuasum, stabilitum, et consecratum. Ep. 90, ad Innocent. Papam.

‡ Audis substantiam? non licet tibi in fide putare, vel disputare pro libito, non hâc illacque vagari per inania opinionum, per devia errorum. Substantiæ nomine aliquid tibi certum, fixumque præfigitur. Certis clauderis finibus, certis limitibus coarctaris: non enim fides existimatio, sed certitudo. Ead. Epist.

§ Ber. Rosignoli, De Discip. Chr. Relig., lib. iij., cap. 4.

‖ Certus sum quia neque mors, neque vita, neque angeli, neque principatus, neque virtutes, neque instantia, neque futura, neque fortitudo, neque altitudo,

whence the Apostle gained this certain conviction of being ever in close union with Christ? and he answers, that it came from the firmness of his faith.*

24. The third property of faith is the fortitude wherewith it enables us to bear all manner of inconvenience, and of torments even, rather than swerve a hair-breadth from our belief in any article of faith. This property results from the foregoing one, for he that is firm and steadfast in the faith, like a rock deeply rooted in the bottom of the sea, braves the shock of temptation and rage of persecutors. St Peter warns us to be strong in the faith, that we may withstand the assaults of the raging lion of hell.† This fortitude in believing was a gift common to Christians of the early Church, for scarce one of them but was ready to face every torture, every disgrace, and death itself in its most appalling shapes, rather than fail in the faith of a single jot of Catholic teaching. Nicephorus relates, that in the persecution of Diocletian, twenty thousand Christians chose rather to be burnt alive in a church where they were assembled than to deny their religion.‡ Lactantius hesitates not to say that, of the faithful who, in his days, were spread over the world, there was not one but was quite willing to die for the faith.§

25. This fortitude in believing derives its origin from several causes. First, from the increased intensity of the habit of faith, which results from frequently exercising acts thereof. Secondly, from the Sacrament of Confirmation, by which, in virtue of Christ's merits, the soul is gifted with an invincible strength to withstand the most formidable assaults that can be

neque profundum, neque creatura alia poterit nos separare a caritate Dei, quæ est in Christo Jesu.

* Unde enim certus erat, nisi ex fidei firmitate? In cap. i., Epist. ad Gal.

† Resistite fortes in fide.

‡ Diocletiani tempore, cum natalis dies Christi festus adesset, viginti millia Christianorum in templo a tyranno igne conflagrari maluerunt, quam a Christianæ fidei veritate deflectere. Historia Ecclesiastica, lib. vij., cap. 6.

§ Cum ab ortu solis, usque ad occasum lex divina suscepta sit, et omnis sexus, et omnis ætas, et gens et regio, unitis et paribus animis Deo serviant, eadem sit patientia, idem contemptus mortis: intelligere debuerant aliquid in eâ esse rationis, quod non sine causâ usque ad mortem defendebatur. Lib. v., cap. 13.

made in order to overthrow faith within us. Thirdly, from that gratuitous gift (*gratia gratis data*) to which the Apostle alludes in the words, *To another is given faith by the same Spirit.** This grace, according to St Thomas, is nothing else than a great constancy and steadfastness of belief.† It is true that nowadays, the persecutions of the tyrants having ceased, we can no longer give proof of this robust faith in the arena amid wild beasts, in fiery furnaces, on the rack, under stripes and scourgings, on gibbets, and amongst swords and axes. Yet may we show it under sickness and sorrow, in the midst of slander and annoyances, of trials and temptations. We may, that is, give proof of this firmness in the loss of fortune, honour, health, or of those nearest and dearest to us; for such trials are a kind of martyrdom, if not as sharp in their actual bitterness, yet more poignant by their duration.‡ If, in such cases, having faith in the everlasting good awaiting us beyond the grave, and in what Christ suffered for us, we prove our constancy under trial, we shall, like the martyrs, be accounted strong in the faith, and be numbered with unconquerable champions and faithful followers of our Blessed Saviour.

26. I may add to these properties a further one, which though not strictly called a property,—as the whole essence of this virtue can exist without it,—yet is an ornament which confers a singular charm and lustre upon faith. This quality is a certain alacrity and joy in believing. The Apostle makes mention of it when alluding to the joy wherewith the early Christians bore the plunder of their goods.§ This joy sprang from the lively faith cherished within the hearts of these good Christians, in the lasting good and the unfading treasures of heaven—it was a joy by which they cheerfully submitted to be stripped of their earthly substance. The same Apostle recurs to this property of faith in his Epistle to the Philippians: *I will abide and will continue*

* Datur alteri fides in eodem spiritu. I. ad Cor. xij. 9.

† Est constantia quædam, et robur in credendo. 2, 2, quæst. 5, art. 4, ad 2.

‡ Acerbitate quidem mitius, sed diuturnitate molestius.

§ Vinctis compassi estis, et rapinam bonorum vestrorum cum gaudio suscepistis, cognoscentes vos habere meliorem, et permanentem substantiam. Ad Hebr. x. 34.

*with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith.** From this joy in believing supernatural and divine truths arose the cheerfulness which the martyrs felt amid their fearful torments, and the contentment experienced by so many holy souls under the most heavy afflictions; as was the case with Moses, who accounted it a greater joy to be despised and oppressed as one of God's people, than to be esteemed the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and to be honoured as the noble scion of a royal race.† So joyous, cheerful, and jubilant a faith could never be attained unless God helped thereto, by a special enlightenment, dissipating our darkness and rendering the objects of the other life present, as it were, to our view. Happy the man to whom God shall vouchsafe so precious a favour, for with it he will advance with rapid strides in the path of perfection.

CHAPTER III.

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH FOR SALVATION AND FOR CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

27. THE Holy Scriptures insist so unmistakably on the necessity of faith for salvation, and much more so for perfection, that one must have fallen from the faith to question it. *He that believes*, says Jesus Christ, *and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be condemned.*‡ *Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that comes to God must believe that He is*,—must believe in His uncreated, independent, indefectible, and incompre-

* Manebo, et permanebo ad profectum vestrum, et gaudium fidei. Ad Phil. i. 25.

† Moyses grandis factus negavit se esse filium filiæ Pharaonis, magis eligens affligi cum populo Dei, quam temporalis peccati habere jucunditatem. Ad Hebr. xj. 24, 25.

‡ Qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit; qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur. Marc. xvj. 16.

hensible Being, *and that He is the rewarder of them that seek Him.** Thus far the Apostle of the Gentiles.

28. St Augustine rightly infers from this that faith is the first beginning of our salvation.† And he accounts for it as follows:—"Without faith no one can become a son of God the Father, or receive sanctifying grace in this, or eternal happiness in the next, life."‡ Whence we may conclude, that if faith is the beginning, it is likewise the foundation, of our everlasting salvation, and the root from which springs the fruit of every good work. This is also the view taken by St Augustine, for he says that there can be no great work that does not derive its origin from faith. "I gaze with admiration on a superb spiritual structure, but I see therein the foundation laid by faith. I praise good deeds, but I know that they are the offshoots of faith."§

29. It may, however, here be objected to me that, in accordance with St Augustine, and divers other of the Holy Fathers, I assigned, in the Second Treatise—eleventh Article, seventh Chapter—for the foundation of spiritual life, not faith, but humility. How then can the holy Doctor say that faith is the primary foundation? This objection is ably met by St Thomas. The structure of Christian life is not like the material framework of our dwellings, which rests on a single foundation. This holy building can have many foundations, each of which may be a primary one, though not under the same point of view. In the spiritual fabric that virtue which mainly rids us of the hindrances that impede our drawing nigh unto God may be called the foundation-stone. In this sense humility is the primary foundation, inasmuch as it banishes pride from our souls—that pride of which God is the declared enemy, even more than is light to darkness or day to

* Sine fide autem impossibile est placere Deo. Credere autem oportet accedentem ad Deum, quia est, et inquirentibus se remunerator sit. Ad Hebr. xj. 6.

† Fides est humanæ salutis initium. De Temp. Serm. 38.

‡ Sine hâc nemo ad filiorum Dei consortium potest pervenire: quia sine ipsâ nec in hoc sæculo quisquam justificationis consequitur gratiam, nec in futurâ vitâ possidebit æternam.

§ Magnum opus, sed ex fide. Laudo superædificationem operis; sed video fundamentum fidei. Laudo fructum boni operis; sed in fide cognosco radicem. In Præfat. Psal. xxxj.

night.* We may also call that virtue which effectively makes us approach to God, the foundation of our spiritual edifice; and in this sense we say that faith is its primary foundation, since by it we have access to God, as St Paul teaches. Hence, may we vindicate this title for faith in a far higher sense than for humility, since the latter virtue helps us to go to God by removing the stumbling-blocks from our path, but by the former virtue we are placed in immediate union with our sovereign good.†

30. No one, therefore, who is not well grounded in faith should start on the spiritual journey, for this would be as absurd as to erect a magnificent palace without having laid a suitable foundation. And when we shall have succeeded in raising the spiritual edifice to its utmost height, we should cling all the more closely to this groundwork of faith, else all will totter to its base, and our spiritual labour will end in a dreadful ruin, as was the case with Origen, who is no less noted for his fall than he was for his prodigious learning. Who was holier, who more learned, than he? The son of a martyred father, the spiritual parent of martyrs, so eager for martyrdom himself, that his mother was frequently obliged to hide his clothes to keep him from giving himself up into the hands of the tyrant, and to the sword of the executioner, in order to shed his blood in witness to the faith; so pure, so blameless too, that he was like an angel in the flesh; so absorbed in contemplation, that he resembled a solitary trained in the deserts of Nitria or Thebais; so overflowing with apostolic zeal, that he spread the holy faith throughout many provinces; so full of wisdom from above, that it took many writers to keep pace with his enlightened and teeming mind.

* Dicendum, quod sicut ordinata virtutum congregatio per quamdam similitudinem ædificio comparatur: ita etiam illud quod est primum in acquisitione virtutum, fundamento comparatur, quod primo in ædificio injicitur. Virtutes autem vere infunduntur a Deo. Verùm primum in acquisitione virtutum potest accipi dupliciter. Uno modo per modum removentis prohibens; et sic humilitas primum locum tenet, in quantum scilicet expellit superbiam, cui Deus resistit. 2, 2, quæst. 161, art. 6, ad. 2.

† Alio modo est aliquid primum in virtutibus directe, per quod scilicet primum ad Deum acceditur. Primus autem accessus ad Deum est per fidem, secundum illud ad Hebr. xj. *Accedentem ad Deum, oportet credere;* et secundum hoc fides ponitur fundamentum nobiliori modo quam humilitas.

Yet, after having raised the edifice of his perfection to such a height, it fell at one shock, overwhelming him, perhaps, in everlasting and irreparable ruin, and this because the groundwork of his faith gave way. Well might St Augustine say that "God's temple within our souls is grounded on faith, erected by hope, perfected by love."* It is plain that if the foundation give way the whole building must come to the ground.

31. With good reason did the Abbot Agatho shrink from the imputation of heresy, although he was used to bear patiently every other calumnious accusation.† We read in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert, that the fame of the profound humility of this anchorite having spread throughout the wilderness, certain monks determined to put it to the test. On reaching his abode, they began to load him with reproaches and outrages. "What a life is yours, Agatho!" they said; "every one is complaining of the pride with which you look down on all mankind: you make no account of anybody, and are ever slandering some one or other. Most people say that you are a fornicator, a lecherous villain, and that, not to be singular in your wickedness, you slander others." While they were thus heaping upon him calumny and insult, Agatho replied: "Quite true; I assuredly am filled with all manner of vice and iniquity." Then, falling on his knees, he begged his accusers to pray that he might be pardoned by God. His calumniators, seeing that all their devices were ineffectual to raise him out of the depths of his humility, tried another attack. "It is said," they continued, "that you have fallen from the faith, and have turned heretic." At these words, Agatho at once arose, and cried, in determined tones, "Oh, no! I am not guilty of that crime; God keep me from such an enormity!" Astonished hereat, the monks asked why, having borne with the imputation of the most grievous sins, he had been stung to the quick at the sole mention of infidelity and heresy. Agatho made answer: "Because infidelity separates the soul from God, and, depriving it of the groundwork of faith, leaves it

* Domus Dei credendo fundatur, sperando erigitur, diligendo perficitur. De Verbis Apost., Serm. 20, cap. 1.

† Ex. Lib. Sentent. Patrum, cap. 20.

wholly indisposed to return to the Lord; which is not the case with other sins: hence I cannot bear the thought of my being guilty of so heinous a crime."

32. But if it be true that without faith salvation is unattainable, still more does this hold good of our perfection; for in the path of Christian perfection we encounter at every step great difficulties, which cannot be overcome without a firm and deeply-rooted conviction of God's goodness, of the claims He has on our service, and without a belief in the good things of eternity, and an intellectual relish of the beauty and charms of virtue. On the other hand, these efficacious and practical notions concerning supernatural objects are compatible only with a lively faith, as Isaias says, according to the version of the Septuagint, *Unless ye believe ye shall not understand.** For faith is the eye of the mind, whereby our soul penetrates into and obtains a thorough knowledge of heavenly truths, as St Cyril of Jerusalem observes, commenting on this very passage.† This is in keeping with the saying of St Augustine: "Faith opens the mind to the understanding of supernatural and heavenly things, while unbelief contracts it."‡ And, indeed, to obtain the enlightenment necessary to smooth away so many and such grievous obstacles, which daily bar the path against the wayfarer on the road to perfection, one must needs be endowed with a lively faith.

33. Rufinus, in his Exposition of the Creed, strives to demonstrate, even by natural reasons, the truth that none can attain the knowledge of divine things unless he be solidly grounded in faith. He illustrates by many comparisons the position that no one can set about an undertaking heartily without some well-founded belief in its success. Whence he infers that without a steadfast faith we have still less reason to expect that we can attain the knowledge of God and of His infinite perfections. The very words of Rufinus are: "You must be established in faith before the gate of the knowledge of divine things will

* Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis. Isai. vij. 9.

† Oculus illuminans omnem conscientiam est fides, et intelligentiam efficiens: dicit enim Propheta: *Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis.* Catech. 5.

‡ Intellectui fides viam aperit, infidelitas claudit. In Sententiis; Sententia 128.

open unto you. For as the mariner will not trust his life to the fickle waves unless he have some steady hope of coming safe and sound out of those stormy seas, neither will the husbandman scatter his seed and sweat on the fields unless he believe that the seed, stimulated by the moisture of the earth and heat of the sun, will germinate, and that the crops, fertilised by favourable winds, will whiten in the fields. Nothing is ever done in this life unless it originate from some well-grounded hope of success. Who would ever bind himself to another in the bonds of wedlock, unless he looked forward to a family and successors to his ancestral heritage? Who ever placed a child under the tuition of a master unless with the expectation that the teacher would transmit his learning to the scholar? Who ever clad himself in regal insignia unless in the expectation of having command over cities and peoples, and of being possessed of a valiant army to defend his kingdom? If, then, no one commences an undertaking save with a prospect of success, how can we without faith and a believing spirit make progress in the knowledge of God, and of what belongs to His service? *

34. If, then, our spiritual progress has its principle in the supernatural knowledge which invigorates the will for action, we must perforce confess that he who has not much faith will never make great progress in perfection; for faith is, so to speak, the nurse of such knowledge, and, contrariwise, he that has a deep faith will advance much. I prove and illustrate this assertion by two events related by Palladius.† Certain tribes dwelling in

* Ut intelligentiæ tibi aditus patescat, recte primo omnium te credere profiteris. Quia neque navim quis ingreditur, et liquido ac profundo vitam committit elemento, nisi prius se credat posse salvari. Nec agricola semina sulcis obruit et pro frugibus spargit in terrâ, nisi crediderit venturos imbres, affuturum quoque solis teporem, quibus terra confota segetem nutriat: nihil denique est quod in vitâ geri possit, si non credulitas ante præcesserit. Denique ideo et matrimonia contrahuntur, quia creditur secutura posteritas; et pueri discendis artibus traduntur, quia magistrorum in discipulos transfundenda creditur disciplina. Imperii quoque insignia unus suscipit, dum credit sibi urbes, et populos, armatum etiam exercitum pariturum. Quod si hæc singula, nisi prius crediderit futura, nullus aggreditur; quomodo non multo magis ad agnitionem Dei credendo veniatur?

† Hist. Lausiac., sect. 44, cap. 54.

a vast plain were sorely grieved because, when their corn was sown, they found that the ears were eaten up by a worm that consumed all the grain. They had recourse to the Priest Copes, and to the other solitaries who lived in that neighbourhood, begging deliverance through their prayers from so great a scourge. The monks replied, that God would bestow this favour upon them if only they had faith. They then filled their garments with the sandy soil, and brought it to those servants of God to be blessed. Nor was their faith disappointed, for thenceforth neither grubs nor locusts devoured their crops; on the contrary, their harvests were so plentiful as to surpass the most fertile regions of Egypt. The second fact is told of some people subject to the king of the Moluccas.* These having forsaken our holy religion at the instigation of their king, their fields soon became so barren that the soil would not yield a single ear of corn nor the trees bear any fruit, so that famine forced them to assuage their hunger with cats, dogs, moles, and other vermin. Thus the soil of the first-named tribe was rendered fertile by their faith, while that of the latter became barren through their unbelief. The like befalls us. Those souls in which a true faith abides, teem like fertile fields with the fruits of every virtue; because faith imbues them with that heaven-sent knowledge which makes them fruitful. Those souls, on the other hand, in whom faith is not found, or in whom it is weak and languid, are a barren soil, yielding no harvest of virtue; or if any spring up, it soon withers and dies, because through their want of faith they are covered with mist and darkness. With St John Chrysostom, therefore, we may conclude, that "Faith is the source of all goodness, the well-spring of holiness, the principle of devotion, and the foundation of our religion. Without faith, no one is fit for union with God, nor is able to scale the lofty heights of the most sublime perfection."† He, then, who is in earnest for his soul's salvation must have a firm faith: he that aspires to perfec-

* In Litteris Molucen. Anno 1565.

† Fides est origo justitiæ, sanctitatis caput, devotionis principium, religionis fundamentum. Nullus unquam sine hâc Dominum promeruit, nullus sine illâ astigit in sublimitatis ascendit. Serm. de Fide, Spe, et Caritate.

tion must have a lively faith, which may, by the power it imparts of realising heavenly truths, urge him manfully to practise acts of virtue and works appertaining to the service of God.

CHAPTER IV.

MEANS OF ACQUIRING PERFECT FAITH, SO NECESSARY FOR PROGRESS IN PERFECTION.

35. The first means is to ask it earnestly and unceasingly of God. This is, of course, a means necessary for the acquirement of every virtue whatsoever; but because there is in every virtue some one special reason urging us to its practice, we must always insist on inculcating the necessity of prayer. Faith is a gift of God, for it depends on a supernatural light illuminating the mind in order to the knowledge of divine truth. Further, faith depends on a certain pious affection imparted by God to the will, whereby this yields up both itself and the understanding to the belief of such truths. Now this supernatural light and this pious motion are not due to us in strict justice, but they are a gratuitous gift, and hence they must be asked for. To pass, then, to faith of a higher order, this depends on the four gifts of the Holy Ghost,—Understanding, Wisdom, Knowledge, and Counsel. By the gift of Understanding the soul penetrates deeply into the divine perfections. By the gift of Wisdom it knows God with relish and sweetness. By the gift of Knowledge the soul appreciates aright, and in a supernatural manner, the things of earth, employing them as means for the compassing of our everlasting end. By the gift of Counsel the soul applies this speculative judgment to practice, and determines what should be done in order to act in a holy manner. But in order that these gifts may produce such salutary effects within us, they must be actuated by the Holy Ghost; for though they permanently abide in the soul of one who is in a state of grace, they are not always working actively. In order, then,

that we may receive this impulse of the Holy Ghost, what are we to do? We are to ask, beg, pray for it, with a holy importunity and frequent petitions. We should learn this lesson of the Apostles, who, though they wanted not faith, ceased not to ask for an increase of the virtue.* And we can also learn from the example of that good father who, when questioned by Jesus Christ as to whether he had faith, answered in the affirmative, yet, knowing that his faith was imperfect, with tears besought our Lord for help, that his faith might be brought to due perfection.† God be thanked, we are believers; we want not the essence of faith, but as our faith is, peradventure, languishing, cold, and dimmed, let us ever, like that good man, say, "*I believe, O Lord; help my unbelief.* Do Thou impart to my faith the light and vigour which is necessary that I may serve Thee in all perfection."‡

36. A second means is to make frequent acts of faith. Every virtue is acquired by exercise. By frequent repetition of acts of patience endurance in adversity is gained. By frequent humiliations we grow humble in disgrace; and the same may be said of every other virtue. The liberal, nay, even the mechanical arts themselves, are to be mastered only by frequent practice. Good painters are made such by frequent painting; so too, able sculptors excel in their art and become celebrated by constant practice. Nor is it otherwise with skilful carpenters and smiths. In like manner, by frequent acts of faith we acquire the virtue of faith, and by this means a Christian attains to the perfection of the virtue. He, then, that would possess the fulness of faith must set himself to ponder the proofs of credibility which we have developed above, in order that he may perceive clearly that the teachings of Holy Church are revealed by God. His mind will be thus duly disposed to assent to them. And when to this is added the impulse of the will, which urges the understanding to bow to these infallible oracles on account of the sovereign truth and wisdom of God Who has given them utterance, there will

* Et dixerunt apostoli Domino: Adauge nobis fidem. Luc. xvij. 5.

† Et continuo exclamans pater pueri, cum lacrymis aiebat: Credo, Domine, adjuva incredulitatem meam. Marc. ix. 24.

‡ Credo, Domine, adjuva incredulitatem meam.

result a firm and, at times, lively assent to these doctrines. By frequent repetition of such acts, our faculties will easily and resolutely adhere to the mysteries of religion, and we shall thus succeed in confirming ourselves in the virtue of faith. But we should exercise our faith especially on those mysteries which are quite above the reach of our understanding; for such truths being more worthy of the greatness of God, we give unto Him all the more glory by adhering to them with a firm faith. St Gregory says that the works of God which can be understood by our natural powers are not wondrous;* but that they excite wonder and admiration when they pass our feeble capacities, as being in that case more suited to the majesty of Him Who is incomprehensible in His essence and works. Hence St Teresa was wont to say, that she believed more firmly in those supernatural truths in which the mind loses itself, and that her faith in them was accompanied with greater devotion and more calm of soul, for she perceived in them the seal of the divine greatness. We must, therefore, frequently exercise ourselves in a humble and submissive faith in the more recondite and abstruse mysteries, in order to give to God greater glory and to our faith more steadfastness.

30. St Ambrose exhorts the faithful to recite every morning with attention and devotion the Apostles' Creed, which contains the primary truths of our holy religion. St Augustine prescribes its recitation every night with the like attention, so that we may always be exercising our faith.† Yet even this is but little; for we ought to be still more assiduous in practising acts of the virtue, according as occasions offer. This will be seen in the following Chapter.

38. Nor must any one run away with the notion that such exercises are suited only to simple or uneducated people; or to silly, devout women. The necessity of exercising ourselves in the virtue of faith is a maxim of spiritual life which must be put in practice by all, however much advanced they may be in virtue; for, of a truth, this is the foundation of Christian perfection, wherein

* Sciendum quod divina operatio, si ratione comprehenditur, non est admirabilis. Hom. 26, in Evang.

† Ad Catech., cap. 1.

they who are most anxious to advance should endeavour to strike the deepest root. I have always been much struck at what St Athanasius relates of the great St Antony. The history may be read in the Annals of Baronius.* As the holy Abbot was at the point of death, at the age of one hundred and five, a great number of his disciples gathered round his bed in order to be present at his happy passage from this life. As they stood weeping around his poor couch, he gave them his last instructions with a weak and tremulous voice. And what do you think these were? Did he give some method for ascending to the sublimest heights of contemplation? Or show some secret path hitherto unexplored in the spiritual world? In no wise. His parting warning to his monks was that they should abide unmoved and unshaken in their faith in Christ, and in the sacred truths revealed in Holy Writ, and handed down to us by Apostolic tradition.† Now, if these holy solitaries, leading a heavenly life here below, stood in need of earnest recommendation, at such a time and under such an affliction, to establish themselves in the faith, which is to be done only by constantly exercising the acts thereof, how much more reason is there not for us to adopt this practice, in order that we may be stable, firm, and well grounded in this most important virtue!

39. The third means is the practice of good works and the performance of pious exercises, since with these faith is quickened, while without them it fails, and becomes extinct. St James teaches this doctrine when he writes that, as a body deprived of life is not living but a corpse, so faith, if devoid of good works, languishes and dies.‡ Two other Apostles agree in this view. St John calls that man a liar and deceiver who boasts that he knows God by the light of faith, but joins not to his belief the keeping of God's commandments:§ which is equivalent to saying that such a one has no faith. And St Paul asserts that to divorce

* Tom. iii. Anno Dom. 318, Ex S. Athanas. in Vitâ S. Anton.

† Custodienda est pia fides in Christum, et patrum religiosa traditio, quam ex scripturarum lectione, et crebro meæ parvitatis audistis admonitu.

‡ Sicut enim corpus sine spiritu mortuum est; ita et fides sine operibus mortua est. Jac. ij. 26.

§ Qui dicit se nosse Deum, et mandata ejus non servat, mendax est. I. Joan. ij. 4.

faith from good works is to profess the knowledge of God with our tongue and to deny Him by our works.* Wherefore St Gregory draws this consequence, that by the tenor of our lives we can determine what kind of faith we have. According to the words of these two holy Apostles, those only can call themselves really believers who fulfil by holy deeds what they profess in word.†

40. Not that these holy Doctors would imply that the absence of good works, or even that the presence of bad works, positively destroy within us the habit of faith, since this can subsist without habitual grace and charity, as St Gregory observes in the parable of him that went to the wedding feast but had not the nuptial garment. This man, says the Saint, is the type of the Christian who, remaining within the pale of the Church, has the habit of faith, but not that of charity.‡ They mean only that faith without works is languishing and devoid of life, barren, and of little use for everlasting salvation, while utterly useless for the acquirement of perfection.

41. On the contrary, good works, if they are frequent, quicken faith, enkindle it, and render it perfect, since they merit a greater light from heaven, and more fervour and firmness in believing, by which faith itself is increased and invigorated. We have a striking instance of this in the Acts of the Apostles. In Cæsarea of Palestine there was a centurion of the Italian legion, Cornelius by name, who, though a Gentile, was gifted with faith in God, and with His holy fear; and who, as the inspired record witnesses, enjoyed the grace and favour of the Almighty.§ What was wanting to him was belief in Jesus Christ, and in the message which our Lord had come upon earth to deliver to mankind; and hence he was as yet deprived of the grace of holy baptism. One day an angel

* Qui confitentur se nosse Deum, factis autem negant. Ad Titum i. 16.

† Quod cum ita sit, fidei nostræ veritatem in vitæ nostræ consideratione debemus cognoscere. Tunc enim veraciter fideles sumus, si quod verbis promittimus operibus implemus. In Evang. Hom. 29.

‡ Intrat enim ad nuptias; sed cum veste nuptiali non intrat, qui in sanctâ ecclesiâ assistens, fidem habet, sed caritatem non habet. In Evang. Hom. 28.

§ Vir quidam erat in Cæsareâ, nomine Cornelius, centurio cohortis quæ dicitur Italica, religiosus, ac timens Deum. Act. Apost. i. 2.

appeared to him in human form, clothed in brightness, and told him to seek out the Prince of the Apostles, Simon Peter. The angel mentioned the town and house where the Apostle might be found, and commanded Cornelius to do whatever Peter should tell him. Singular, indeed, was the favour granted to him alone among so many Gentiles who lived with him; conveyed to him, moreover, by an ambassador from the court of heaven. But how came he to be found worthy that his faith in God should be extended to Jesus Christ, to His gospel, and to holy baptism? For as these things had lately been promulgated in Palestine, they began to be binding on its inhabitants. The grace is accounted for by his daily good works. "Thy numerous alms deeds and thy frequent prayers have gone up as a sweet perfume before God; and have moved Him to send me to thee that I might show thee the way to the Christian Faith, which is all that is wanting to insure thy eternal salvation."* This is the explanation given of this passage in the excellent commentary of Cornelius à Lapide.†

42. Now, if it be true that without good works faith is dead, and that with them it is quickened, and becomes fervent and vigorous, augments, increases and is perfected, let him be earnest in deeds of charity, self-denial, humiliation and devotion, who is desirous of reaching a high degree of faith and, by its means, of ascending to the heights of perfection.

CHAPTER V.

VARIOUS METHODS OF PRACTISING THE VIRTUE OF FAITH.

43. THE *just man lives by faith.*‡ What is the meaning of these words? They signify that as living creatures sustain life by the air they breathe, as fishes find support in the waters amid

* Dixit autem illi: orationes tuæ, et eleemosynæ tuæ ascenderunt in memoriam in conspectu Dei. Et nunc mitte viros in Joppen. Act. Apost. x. 4.

† Ideoque eas digno præmio remunerari volens mittit me ad te, ut ostendam tibi viam ad fidem et salutem. In textu citato.

‡ Justus autem meus ex fide vivit. Hebr. x. 38.

which they swim, so just men are supported by the faith which they are ever exercising in all their actions. The sinner leads either a brutal life if, wholly intent on what his senses set before him, he wallow in the filth of pleasure; or he leads a merely human life if, listening to the instincts of right reason, he follow out in his conduct the dictates of natural religion. But the just man who strives after perfection leads a divine life, seeing that he orders his thoughts, words, and deeds according to the maxims of supernatural and divine faith. Such, then, is the way to practise the virtue of theological faith; it must be made the actual rule of all our doings.

44. But let us descend to particulars, for abstract and general formulas are not suited to every capacity. If a devout person desire that his mental and vocal prayer be perfect, let him take faith as his companion and guide therein. In vocal prayer, he must believe that God is present to hearken to his petitions with a favourable ear, and, under the safe guidance of faith, he will address to the Almighty his praise, petitions, and desires. At mental prayer, he should believe with a firm and lively faith that God is present to him and beholds, with clear gaze, every posture of his body and every motion of his heart. He must set before himself the mysteries and truths that he has chosen for his consideration, in the way they are taught him by faith and, by its light—always mixed, it is true, with some darkness—must regulate his affections; thus will they all become sincere and meritorious. He is not to seek for tenderness, or sweetness, or sensible consolations, which often have their source in nature rather than in faith. Should these fail him, he ought not to be distressed. If he abound in them, he must not immoderately rejoice. Let him lean ever on the foundation of faith, which cannot possibly give way. Much less is he to desire visions, voices, and other extraordinary favours, which are the more dangerous to some souls because they bear a more specious appearance. A plain act of faith is far more secure than the most ravishing visions of heavenly objects.

45. I may refer to this matter what Fr. Bernardine Rosignoli relates of Alphonsus I., King of Portugal.* Finding himself

* De Actibus Virt., lib. iv., cap. 6.

face to face with countless hosts of Saracens, no less hostile to him than to the Christian name, he saw, on first coming forth from his quarters to encounter them, streaming from the East, a bright ray, which, widening more and more, grew so dazzling as almost to eclipse the light of the sun. As the holy king was considering this shining meteor with the utmost wonder, he beheld in the midst of it an immense Cross, and on the Cross a figure of Christ crucified. At this sight, Alphonsus unbuckled his sword, put off his regal ornaments, and taking off his shoes fell prostrate in the dust; then, with a profusion of joyous tears, he began to say: "Why, Lord, hast thou come to visit me? Is it to increase my faith? Rather do thou vouchsafe this bright vision to these miscreants, who believe not in Thee; but not to me, who firmly hold Thee to be the son of the Father Everlasting in Heaven, of the Virgin Mary on earth, and who adore Thee as my true God."* Our Blessed Saviour made him answer, that He came not to increase his faith, but to cheer his spirit for the approaching battle; adding, that if he would put his trust in Him, he would gain the victory, not only in this combat, but in every other that he might be engaged in against the enemies of the holy Cross. This occurrence is to be found on record in the Cistercian Abbey of Alcobaz, written out by the king's own hand, attested by his seal, and authenticated by the prelates and grandees of his kingdom.

46. You will have observed that this holy king, at the first glance at Christ crucified, renounced the vision, saying that he preferred to see Him darkly, by means of faith, to seeing Him clearly, by the eyes of the body; and that such visions were more suited to unbelievers than to those that had the faith. The reader will learn herefrom that in his prayers he must not seek for sensible consolations and sweetness, still less for visions, voices, and revelations; but must be content with faith, which, though less agreeable at times, is ever safer and, as a general rule, even more advantageous. Such sensible signs, says the Apostle, are

* Quid tu ad me, Domine? Credenti animo fidem vis augere? Melius est, ut te videant infideles, et credant, quam ego, qui a fonte baptismatis te Deum verum, filium Virginis, et Patris æterni, cognovi et agnosco.

a gift which God grants to unbelievers rather than to be lievers.*

47. Further, a devout person when going to Confession will not lose sight of faith while having recourse to this Sacrament. He will not waste time in debating whether the Priest, in the advice he gives, be ignorant or learned, imprudent or discreet, blunt or affable. He will confine his thoughts to the fact that God's minister is holding the place of God; that his word is the word of God; that in pronouncing the absolution he is dispensing the Blood of Christ, and washing therein the soul of the penitent from every stain and defilement of sin. Thus he will gain abundant fruit from his Confessions, and avoid the many spiritual inconveniences which spring from considering our Confession with the eyes of the flesh, rather than with those of faith.

48. The faithful soul, when about to receive Holy Communion, will prepare to partake of this Food of Angels by a lively faith in the real presence of the Saviour under the eucharistic veils. In such faith will he receive It and cherish It in his breast, and be satisfied with the affections (whether dry or fervent, arid or tender), wherewith this faith will inspire his heart; nor will he follow those who leave the Holy Table all troubled and in disquiet if they fail to experience a certain relish and inward taste of the presence of Christ, such as is perceived by the palate when we take our food. For darkling faith, and motions of the will suffice, even though these be not sensible, to receive that increase of grace, and that abundance of actual help, which are the effects and fruit produced by this august Sacrament in faithful souls.

49. Surius relates,† that in a certain country-house in England there dwelt a Priest who disgraced his sacred character by an infamous life. God, being moved to pity for him, called him back to Himself by the following prodigy. While celebrating the Holy Sacrifice, as he was dividing the Sacred Host, It began to drip with blood. Astounded and terrified at this wondrous sight, he entered into himself, roused himself from the deadly torpor of his vices, and began a course of life as penitential as his former career

* Signa sunt, non fidelibus, sed infidelibus.
† Tom. vj. In Vitâ S. Ugon. Episc.

had been dissolute, so that in a short time he won among his neighbours a reputation for great holiness. Meanwhile St Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, being on his travels in those parts, wished to meet him. The Priest having told him the story of the miracle that he had witnessed at the altar, wanted to show him the cloths still stained with the miraculous blood. The saintly Bishop refused to see them, nor would he have them shown to any of his suite, saying, "Let those persons run after such sights and tokens who believe not that Christ's Body and Blood abide under the sacramental veils; for us, who are believers, faith suffices." And as, notwithstanding all this, some would persist in their desire to see these miraculous stains, he rebuked them sharply, telling them that they were moved by curiosity, not by devotion; that it was more perfect to believe without seeing, according to those words of Christ, *Blessed are they that have not seen but have believed.** Let those take this for themselves who are ever so eager, when they go to Communion, for some sensible proof of Christ's presence, given by a certain sweet and delicious feeling and tender emotion; as they crave for the sensible experience of the inner senses, even if they seek not that of the outer. Let them learn from this holy Bishop to rely solely on faith, which, though devoid of direct evidence, is far more meritorious; and by it let them regulate the motions of their will. Not that I would have them reject sensible consolations when God is pleased to vouchsafe them, since He Who gives them knows our needs, and they cannot fail to be profitable if we receive them with humility and detachment, in a thankful spirit. All I mean is, that failing such consolations, we should walk by faith, and rest content with those acts and affections of the will suggested by this virtue, though they be devoid of savour.

50. But faith should sanctify not only the prayer and spiritual duties, but even the most indifferent actions of devout persons. We should frequently renew our faith in God's presence, and direct all our actions to Him. Thus shall we impart to our meanest and poorest works holiness and merit, which will make them worthy of

* Beati qui non viderunt, et crediderunt. Joan. xx. 29.

a never-ending reward. It was by this method that Dositheus soon became a saint.

51. When assailed by temptation, the spiritual man should, as St Paul says, *take up the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the most wicked one.** He should believe that God never forsakes them that forsake not him ;† that "He will not suffer them that seek Him to perish ;'‡ nor those that go after Him and call on Him for help. Armed with this faith, he will cry for aid, will make acts contrary to the temptation, and will thereby strike down the hellish foes who come to assail him. We read the following story in the Chronicles of the Friars Minor. That great servant of God, John of Alvernia,§ one day beheld some demons in the shape of hideous black men, who were shooting sharp arrows at different people. He saw that some were pierced through and through, and these were poor wretches who consented to the suggestions of the devil. With others the arrows fell harmless at their feet ; these were ever watchful and on their guard, and refused to consent when foully tempted. With others, scarce had the darts reached them but they glanced back and struck with violence the loathsome monsters who had sped them on their fatal errand. These were the generous souls who, not satisfied with acting on the defensive, rejected the temptations by opposite acts, and thus struck their assailants with their own weapons. So, too, should we behave in the like conflicts ; but it must not be forgotten that the buckler wherewith the darts of the devil are thus driven back is forged only in the workshop of faith. ‖

52. In the seasons, too, of trial, faith must be the breastplate by which you will arm your heart, lest it be transpierced by the darts of adversity. Amid your crosses, turn with the eye of faith to contemplate Christ suffering, and you will find in this meditation a great solace in all your woes. This was the plan of St Eleazar, Count of Ariano, who in times of distress, keeping the eye of

* Sumentes scutum fidei, in quo possitis omnia tela nequissimi ignea extinguere. Ephes. vj. 16.

† Deus non deserit, nisi deseratur. S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xiij., cap. 15.

‡ Non dereliquisti quærentes te, Domine. Ps. ix. 11.

§ Chron. PP. Minor., part II., lib. vij., cap. 8.

‖ Sumentes scutum fidei.

faith fixed on the sufferings of the Saviour, attained so invincible a patience that he was never seen to give any sign of disquiet under his misfortunes.* Being asked one day by his wife, Delphina, if he was made of stone or marble, since he showed no resentment under the strokes of injustice, contumely, and outrage, he replied, "What is the use, Delphina, of being angry? When I feel stung to the quick, I turn to contemplate with the eye of faith the boundless ignominy which my Saviour suffered for my sake, and this sight overwhelms my heart with such sweetness, that I feel no less love for them that affront than for those who honour and serve me; and I pray God as earnestly for my enemies as for my friends."

53. Or, again, the afflicted person may behold with a lively faith the hand of God chastening him for his greater profit, as holy Job did, when, without staying to consider the immediate causes of his great losses, he looked up only to God with the eye of true faith, and acknowledged Him alone for the Author of his grievous misfortunes.† The soul plunged in sorrow may also, in the light afforded by faith, contemplate the greatness of the goods awaiting us in our heavenly home, in recompense of the trials suffered in this mournful exile, as the saintly mother of the martyr Symphorian did with her son, in whose ear she whispered, "My Son, my dearest Son, look up to Heaven, and consider by the light of faith how glorious is the crown prepared to reward you for this passing struggle."‡ To be brief, true fortitude in endurance is the product of faith alone. The constancy which springs from human motives is as brittle as glass, while that which is inspired by the supernatural motives of faith is strong as adamant.

54. The same holds good of every other virtue, since, if their practice is to be supernatural, meritorious, and persevering, they all need to be regulated by faith. Thus, if you are called upon to obey one who has authority over you, think at once of those words of Jesus Christ, "*He that heareth you heareth Me*,§ and be-

* Sur. in Vitâ, 27 Sept., cap. 25.
† Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit.
‡ Nate, nate, cœlum suspice.
§ Qui vos audit, me audit. Luc. x. 16.

hold in the expression of the will of man the formal declaration of the will of God. If you are asked to bestow alms on the poor, call to mind the words of our blessed Lord, *I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; thirsty, and ye gave Me to drink;* * and believe that the mercy shown by you to the poor will reach even to the very person of Christ. If you afford help to your neighbour, whether by good advice, by instruction, by consolation in trouble, or by assisting him in his needs, bear in mind that word of Christ, *What you have done to these My brethren you have done to Me;*† and rest assured that your services to a neighbour are rendered to your Saviour, Who pledges Himself to reward you for them. Do the like in regard of every other virtue you may have to practise. I say that it is essential to act in this manner, in order that your virtuous acts may be holy and meritorious; for if you are moved to deeds of virtue by motives of the fitness and beauty which natural reason discovers and, as it were, points out to you, and which are to be found in every good work, your act will doubtless be naturally, but not supernaturally, holy; it will not avail for a reward that knows no end, because merit supposes the act to derive its origin from knowledge that is supernatural, and illumined by the light of faith. In a word, the spiritual life must have its beginning in faith, and our increase in the Spirit must depend upon the same virtue.

CHAPTER VI.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE.

55. FIRST suggestion. The Director must take heed not to commit the grievous error of judging some to be devoid of faith in whom it is really most vigorous. I throw out this caution, because

* Esurivi, et dedistis mihi manducare; sitivi, et dedistis mihi bibere. Matth. xxv. 35.

† Quod uni ex minimis meis fecistis, mihi fecistis. Matth. xxv. 40.

there are many souls desirous of perfection, who, by God's permission, suffer violent temptations against faith for no other purpose but that it may more firmly root itself within them. And as a citadel is more strongly fortified, and rendered, as it were, impregnable on the side most exposed to the assaults of the enemy, so do virtuous souls become more firm and steadfast in those very virtues which are more frequently the point of the attacks of the devil, because they offer manful resistance whenever they meet these onslaughts of our great enemy. This is the reason why we so often fall in with timorous souls who are tortured with temptations to unbelief. Not only out of times of prayer, but even while occupied in praying, it seems to them that there is neither God nor Heaven nor hell, and that the Catholic religion is merely a mad dream of fevered and gloomy brains. God allows these persons to be exposed to such conflicts, in order that, meeting the doubts that whirl through their minds by contrary acts, they may be more firmly rooted in the virtue of faith.

56. St John Chrysostom likens these souls to ships driven by the wind, and tossed to and fro by the waves, but which, riding at anchor, are able to defy the perils of shipwreck. These souls, troubled and agitated though they be by distressing suggestions of unbelief, acquire by means of contrary acts a firmer hold upon faith, and thus escaping the shipwreck of infidelity, reach at length, after wearisome struggles, the haven of a complete tranquillity.*

57. Second suggestion. But in order not to go astray in the discernment of spirits, Directors must examine whether the perplexing thoughts which disquiet their penitents have their origin in some fault of their own,—whether they set themselves to search studiously into Catholic truths and, when a difficulty presents itself, choose, instead of rejecting it forthwith, to side rather

* Quemadmodum navem ventorum impetu jactatam, et fluctuum assultu inundatam demissa anchora omnino stabilit, et vel in medio pelago radicat; ita etiam navem nostram extraneis cogitationibus jactatam, adventu suo fides ex imminenti naufragio liberat, tamquam in tranquillum portum, in conscientiæ certitudinem deducens. Hom. super Verba Apost., "*Habentes autem eundem spiritum.*"

with their vacillating mind. If this be the case, they are guilty of grievous unbelief in withholding a firm faith from the Word of God. For, on the one hand, it cannot be doubted that such truths are revealed by God, seeing that they are established by such evident proofs; and, on the other hand, it is no slight affront to the First and Infallible Truth to question what It has been pleased to make known to us. Such people are always blameworthy, and have themselves to thank for their perplexities. Wherefore the Director will correct their errors, and remind them of that maxim of St Augustine, that the first and main reason for believing the awful mysteries of faith is the almighty power of God.* He will further recall to their minds another noted saying of the same holy Doctor: "We must needs own that God can do what our limited minds cannot comprehend." † He will relate to them the well-known story of the child whom the same holy Father saw seated on the sea-shore, trying to empty the vast expanse of waters into a hole which he had scooped out in the sand. Being remonstrated with by St Augustine for his folly, he replied, that it was far more feasible a task to empty the sea into that small hole than for the Saint to conceive in his mind the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Consequently, the Director must command penitents never to dwell on such thoughts, since it is their duty to bear in mind that the works of God far transcend the capacity of our understandings, but rather to steady their vacillating reason by an act of lively faith in the truths of revelation.

58.—Third suggestion. However, should the Director see that his penitent gives no occasion to thoughts of unbelief, that such thoughts arise within him without fault of his own, and to his great distress and grief of heart, no anxiety need be felt on account of them, for the tortures suffered are a sure token that the will is far from giving consent; that it refuses not only to adhere to the evil suggestion, but positively abhors it. The Confessor may rest

* In rebus miris summa credendi ratio est omnipotentia Creatoris. Lib. xxj. De Civ. Dei, cap. 7.

† Demus Deum aliquid posse, quod nos fateamur investigare non posse. Ibid.

assured, that the misgivings felt as to the truths of our belief are merely temptations of the devil, which God allows, that the virtue of faith may become more firmly rooted. He will prescribe by way of remedy, merely to despise these molestations of the enemy, and to make as little account of them as he would of the idle prattle of an idiot; that is, the penitent should be instructed to turn his back upon Satan without giving heed to his words. It is scarce to be credited how acutely our haughty foe feels such contempt, and how much it avails to put him to flight. If the temptation prove vehement, the assailed person may arm himself against it with an act of faith, but only in general, in regard of every truth of revelation, without laying any particular stress on the mystery against which he may be tempted; for thus to particularise would be dangerous, and might lay him open to fresh attacks.

59. Above all, the Confessor must encourage the penitent to such conflicts by reminding him of the necessity there is of running the gauntlet of many temptations before we can attain any degree of perfection; and this is especially applicable to the trial of which we are speaking, as by means of these involuntary waverings the soul is more solidly grounded in the virtue of faith, and lays a firmer foundation for the spiritual life. Sophronius relates* that a virgin consecrated to God had to endure violent assaults of sensuality. She stood her ground bravely; but, the more intense her resistance, the greater the violence wherewith the enemy returned to the assault. Being at length wearied out, she prayed God to deliver her. Almighty God heard her prayer, and sent an angel to console her, who commanded her to repeat those words of the Psalm, "*Pierce my flesh with Thy fear;*"† assuring her of a lasting deliverance. The result justified the promise; for scarce had she recited the inspired verse, but she was wholly rid of all impure suggestions. But a few days after this deliverance she was assailed with a grievous temptation against faith. Emboldened by the former success of her prayers, she had recourse to them once more, and besought God, with her

* Prat. Spirit., cap. 209.

† Confige timore tuo carnes meas. Ps. cxviij. 120.

whole heart, to free her from a temptation even more harassing than its predecessor. The angel appeared to her a second time, and told her that it is not given to man to live here below without some kind of temptation; hence, she might take her choice between temptations against purity and against faith. She made choice of the former; for, although she found them wearisome, still they seemed to her to be less impious. So that Directors, coming across persons who are sorely distressed with suggestions of unbelief, must tell them, as the angel told this young virgin, that in the spiritual path none can journey long without temptation. "*Because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should try thee,*"* said Raphael to Tobias. As we must needs endure some temptation or other, let us put up with the one which God sends us, and bear peacefully the interior anguish which it causes. But, at the same time, the Confessor should assure his afflicted penitents that if they resist they cannot be guilty of a grievous sin. This assurance will help to encourage them to despise such temptations with greater confidence of victory.

60. Fourth suggestion. The Director will take care that his penitents acquire the habit of performing their actions in blind faith; not that a clear, enlightened faith, accompanied by many sensible consolations, is not holy and profitable and to be received in lowly detachment when God vouchsafes it—as we have before observed—but because it is not always at our beck and call in this wretched life. The Director will not find a single saint who has not had to suffer long and distressing dryness. Even Christ Himself, although during His mortal life He beheld with unclouded gaze the face of His Father, willingly suffered, before dying, a desolation that brought Him to the extremities of agony. Can it, then, be supposed that His servants are to be exempt during their pilgrimage from the like desolation and aridity? We need to have impressed upon us the truth that a continuous enjoyment of spiritual consolations belongs properly not to the present, but to a future life. And, on the other hand, how will a person behave in the season of such darkness and

* Quia acceptus eras Deo, necesse fuit ut tentatio probaret te. Tob. xij. 13.

dryness, who has not become accustomed to walk by an obscure faith, since at such time no other guide is to be had to lead us along the spiritual path than pure and unmixed faith? Surely such a one will do just what other misguided and ill-trained persons do; he will fall into diffidence and be discouraged, will be filled with anxiety, grow slack in God's service, or perhaps even forsake it altogether. Hence, spiritual persons must of necessity get accustomed to act by mere faith, apart from all clear light and sensible consolations, in order to abide firm and constant in the practice of good in whatever state it may please God to place them. And when the Director shall see his penitents, while undergoing frequent dryness, help themselves by the maxims of blind faith, and persevere in the exercise of virtue without retracing one single step in the path they have entered upon, he should hold them in great esteem, because these are strong, manly souls, and more solidly rooted in the faith than any others.

ARTICLE II.

On the Virtue of Theological Hope.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEFINITION OF THEOLOGICAL HOPE.

61. The affections of the will which we call Desire and Hope, though they have many points in common, since both have for their object the attainment of some good, are yet very dissimilar in reality. For Desire regards good apart from all consideration of the ease or difficulty of its possession, while Hope ever aims at an object which it is difficult and arduous to reach. Thus, for instance, a prince might say to his attendants, "I wish to eat some

particular kind of fruit, in order to moisten my parched lips;" but if he would speak correctly, he could not say, "I hope to eat an apple," since such kind of fruit is so easily obtained. Further, as St Thomas observes, hope implies a certain effort and eagerness of the soul (and in this it differs from mere desire), which aims at overcoming the hindrances that thwart its attainment of the good hoped for.* And, indeed, hope is an affection of which man is greatly in need, if he is to be successful in mastering the impediments which oppose his gaining possession of the good aimed at by his desire.

62. This being taken for granted, we now proceed to the supernatural hope that forms the subject-matter of this Article—a virtue which should constantly animate our hearts. Hope, then, is a theological virtue, which raises our will to a steadfast expectation of everlasting bliss, as well as of the means of attaining it, grounded on the promises of a God at once infinitely powerful and supremely faithful in keeping His word. In this short sentence we have said many things which need a detailed explanation, in order that they may be clearly understood by persons unaccustomed to these subjects. There can be no question, then, but that the hope of which we are now speaking is a theological virtue, since it immediately regards God as the object of the bliss whereunto it aspires, and is animated to perform its acts by the promises of the same all-powerful, true, and faithful God. Neither may we doubt the utter impotency of our will to produce such an act, to conceive such hope, unless God, raising our will by His grace, make it capable of putting forth an act which wholly transcends our natural powers. Because the good things of the next world, and whatever disposes us thereunto, are far beyond the reach of the human intellect, and so transcend it that it cannot of itself aspire thereto by its desires.

63. In proof of this, the sages of old, after so many speculations, could imagine no other beatitude, nor yearn after any other happiness, than the poor enjoyments which are to be derived from the goods of the natural order. And this because they were de-

* Spes supra desiderium addit quemdam conatum, et quamdam elevationem animi ad consequendum bonum arduum. 1, 2, quæst. 25, art. 1.

prived of that divine light which discovers to us goods of a far higher order. Hence it has been aptly observed by St Bernard on this point, that no one can place his hope in God unless he have been stirred up by the Holy Ghost to hope in Him.* Nor is this truth put less well by St Prosper in the pregnant sentence, "The hope of them that trust in God is a mercy of God, who, by His grace, moves us to hope."† This is why I said in my explanation that hope is a theological virtue, which raises the will above itself, enabling it to produce an act wholly beyond its natural powers.

64. Now this theological hope, so far transcending the powers of nature, has for its first and main object eternal blessedness—that is, God seen face to face, heartily beloved and wholly possessed by means of this vision and of this love; for herein does our full and perfect happiness consist. Such is the teaching of St Thomas.‡

65. This doctrine is grounded on the two following reasons. The first is that alleged by the above-quoted holy Doctor, and it is most convincing. The object of our hope, he writes, must be some good proportionate to the greatness of Him Who confers it upon us; and because God can bestow an infinite good, as endless happiness most assuredly is, this has to be the object of our yearnings.§ The second reason is, that our will being unbounded in its desires, the absence of a suitable good, able to satisfy it, suffices to make it restless. Aman enjoyed the highest honours at the court of Assuerus; he could wield the king at his will; the people did him homage; he was, so to speak, on a level with his sovereign;

* Non alius ex sententiâ dicere potest, *Quoniam tu es, Domine, spes mea,* nisi cui intus persuasum sit ex Spiritu Sancto. In Ps. xc.

† Fiducia sperantium misericordia Dei est. In Ps. cxxx.

‡ Non enim minus aliquid a nobis sperandum est, quam sit in se, cum non sit minus ejus bonitas, per quam bona creaturæ communicat, quam ejus essentia. Ideoque proprium et principale objectum spei, est beatitudo æterna. 2, 2, quæst. 15, art. 2.

§ Oportet autem effectum esse causæ proportionatum; et ideo bonum, quod proprie, et principaliter a Deo sperare debemus, est bonum infinitum, quod proportionetur virtuti Dei adjuvantis: nam infinitæ virtutis est proprium ad infinitum bonum perducere: hoc autem bonum est vita æterna quæ in Dei fruitione consistit. Loco citato.

he had abundance of riches, pleasures, and a numerous offspring; nothing was wanting to him but the obeisance of the poor stranger Mardocheus. This was enough, however, to poison his rest, to make him feel that all his other advantages were as nothing, since he had not that on which he had set his heart. This he was compelled to acknowledge with his own lips.* What was wanting to Solomon, on whom plenty, treasures, magnificence, glory, pleasures, dainties, wisdom, power, and honours were heaped, so as to render, if it were possible, his happiness complete? Yet he in his turn confesses that in all this he had found but bitterness and affliction of spirit.† For he was debarred from the enjoyment of other goods which are not bestowed in this miserable life. Whence it follows, that as in God alone all possible good is to be found in its highest degree, in Him alone can our souls be fully sated, and find perfect rest and happiness. "I will grant thee to see Me," said the Lord to Moses, "I will show thee all good, and bestow on thee their perfect possession."‡ Thus, as soon as the soul reaches to the full comprehension of that good which contains in itself all good, and is able to clasp it in the twofold strong embrace of knowledge and of love, it finds therein an abyss of unfathomable joys and delights, beyond which it has nothing more to desire, so that it remains perfectly happy in this fulness of satisfaction.

66. St Augustine has a beautiful passage on this matter. "So great," he writes, "is the joy and gladness resulting from the vision of the Eternal Light, Unchangeable Truth, and Divine Wisdom, that for a single day of such delights we might justly despise countless years of the enjoyment afforded by the goods of time."§ And he alleges, in proof of what he advances, the words of the Psalmist,

* Et cum hæc omnia habeam, nihil me habere puto, quamdiu videro Mardochæum Judæum sedentem ante fores regias. Esther v. 13.

† Vidi in omnibus vanitatem, et afflictionem animi. Eccles. ij. 11.

‡ Ostendam tibi omne bonum. Exod. xxxiij. 18.

§ Tanta est pulchritudo justitiæ, tanta jucunditas lucis æternæ, hoc est incommutabilis veritatis, et sapientiæ, ut etiam si non liceret amplius in eâ manere quam unius diei mora, propter hoc solum innumerabiles anni hujus vitæ pleni deliciis, et affluentia temporalium bonorum recte meritoque contemnerentur.

"*Better is a day in Thy courts than a thousand*—even, years—spent apart from thee, O God, amid worldly delights."*

67. It pleased God once to furnish a practical illustration of this truth to a certain monk in the following wondrous manner:† The religious was singing in choir a verse of the Psalms, not unlike that which we have just heard quoted by St Augustine: *A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, which has passed by.*‡ And he was sorely perplexed to conceive how a thousand years could ever glide away so swiftly for one who contemplates the face of God, so as to seem but as yesterday that is gone and passed. At the end of Matins, the monk stayed in the choir, begging God to open his mind that he might take in the hidden meaning of these words. While he was thus praying, there appeared to him a little bird, or rather an angel in that shape, which, by the sweetness of its melody, ravished him, and drew him forth from the choir and church, leading him little by little, without his perceiving it, into a thick, shady forest, hard by the monastery, and there kept him in an ecstasy for the space of full three hundred years, miraculously prolonging his life by the sweetness of its notes. The bird at length disappeared, and the monk, coming to himself, fancied that only a few hours had elapsed, and that it was barely time for Terce; so he betook himself to the monastery. But to his amazement, as he reached the gate, he saw a porter who was an utter stranger to him. The porter, in his turn, taking him for a stranger, stopped him at gateway, and asked him what his business might be. "I am," replied the monk, "the sacristan of the monastery. I went out just after Matins, and am now returning to my cell." "How is this?" said the porter; "I have never seen you, nor do I know you. If, as you say, you are an inmate of this house, tell me the names of the Abbot, Prior, and of the other monks who live here." As the answer did not tally with the names of the Community then residing in the house, the porter was puzzled, and

* Non enim falso, aut parvo affectu dictum est: *Quoniam melior est dies unus in atriis tuis, super millia.* Lib. iij., De Lib. Arb., cap. ult.

† Spec. Exem. Dist. 49, Exempl. 45.

‡ Mille dies ante oculos tuos tamquam dies hesterna quæ præteriit. Ps. lxxxix.

took the monk to the Abbot, who, after a long conversation, found, on turning to the archives of the monastery, that the Abbot and monks named by the stranger had lived and died there three hundred years before, and that just so many centuries had sped by since he had left the house whence he had been drawn by that heavenly melody. Thus did God give this monk to understand by his own experience the words of the Psalmist just quoted. Now, if a slight foretaste of the joys of Heaven could make three centuries pass by as swiftly as three short hours, much more will the sight of God, which overwhelms the soul in a gladness greater beyond compare, cause thousands of years to glide by quick as a flash of lightning, so that they may well be likened to yesterday that has come and gone. The reader may now perceive what reason St Augustine had to say that all earthly goods, though enjoyed for countless ages, are not to be compared to an hour of that unspeakable delight which springs from the clear vision of the Sovereign Good.

68. What object, then, can there be more worthy of Christian hope than a bliss so great, so pure, so perfect, so complete, so fitted to satisfy our will, and to rest our spirit in sweetest repose? Let him that has the wish, with vain hope and idle desires, seek after the passing and despicable goods of time, which lure but do not satisfy, which fascinate but do not fill: all that such a one will gain in the end is to wear himself out like the spider in weaving a web to catch the worthless prey of a deceitful pleasure.

69. Theological hope has for its secondary object the several means without which we cannot attain the full possession of God, in Whom is found, as we have often before seen, our real happiness. These means are sanctifying grace, forgiveness of sins, those lights of the mind which point out the way of salvation, the devout affections of the will, encouraging us to walk in that road, virtues, purity of conscience, supernatural gifts, outward aids stirring up to virtuous action. It may not be questioned but that these also are objects of our hope, since God not only wills that we should hope for the happiness of heaven, but also supplies the means without which we could never attain that happiness. It is important that this distinction should not be lost sight of; for

our happiness being the term of our hopes, is also their primary object, while the means which are, so to speak, the way whereby we reach this blessed term, form their subordinate, or secondary object. This is the teaching of the Angelic Doctor.*

70. If, therefore, you ask me whether temporal blessings which the faithful so frequently beg of God,—as, for instance, health, bodily strength, prosperity, honours, office, wealth, riches, and the like,—are an object of supernatural and theological hope, I answer, that if we look for these frail goods as means necessary or suited to our successful attainment of everlasting blessings (that is, inasmuch as they help us to recover or to obtain God's grace to avoid sin or to rise out of it, to acquire virtue or to increase it, to procure or to forward God's glory), they, too, are to be accounted objects of Christian hope. Of this we may not doubt, as St Augustine expressly says as much. His words are: "Those blessings alone are objects of the theological virtue of hope which are contained in the Lord's Prayer."† He then adds that this prayer comprises seven petitions, three of which regard eternal blessings, and the remaining four such as are temporal; but that the goods of this world are objects of godly hope only in so far as they are sought as means to the attainment of everlasting blessings.‡

71. But if temporal goods are rather a hindrance than a means to everlasting bliss, if, instead of being a ladder to heaven, they prove a stumbling-block which precipitates us into the bottomless pit, they can in no wise be the objects of divine hope, but are truly enemies which war against it, and thwart its most holy purposes. St Severinus, having delivered many persons afflicted with infirmity from divers ailments, steadily refused to restore sight to a monk called Bonosus, and, to the entreaties and importunity of

* Spes principaliter quidem respicit beatitudinem æternam: alia vero quæ petuntur a Deo, respicit secundario in ordine ad beatitudinem æternam. 2, 2, quæst. 17, art. 2, ad. 2.

† De his omnibus, quæ fideliter sunt credenda, ea tantum ad spem pertinent, quæ in oratione dominicâ continentur.

‡ Apud Evangelistam Matthæum septem petitiones continere dominica videtur oratio, quarum in tribus æterna poscuntur, in reliquis quatuor temporalia: quæ tamen propter æterna consequenda sunt necessaria. In Enchirid., cap. 114.

this unhappy blind man, would ever answer: "My son, it is inexpedient for you to be freed from this affliction; rather should you beg of God to be always kept in darkness, as by this means you will be made fit for heaven." Whence, being content to be blind, he ceased to pray to God for his cure.* St Adhemar, Bishop of Tarbes, being present at the translation of the remains of St Vedast, Bishop of Arras, recovered his sight, whereof he had been deprived. But reflecting afterwards that bodily sight did not contribute to that of the soul, inasmuch as it distracted him from union with God, he prayed that his blindness might return and his eyes might be closed to the things of this earth, provided they were always kept open to those of heaven; and God heard his prayer.† Behold how the saints set no store on being favoured with temporal blessings, or on being delivered from the evils of this life, save in so far as these tend to the attainment of everlasting bliss; for they were fully aware that if they hoped or prayed for such favours or such deliverance for any other end, these gifts ceased to be objects of godly hope. And as we are unable to distinguish which among temporal goods and blessings or afflictions will smooth the path to our heavenly home and which will prove an obstacle to our progress, it behoves us to pray for the bestowal of the former and for deliverance from the latter, on the condition that such will help us to attain our final bliss. Thus will our hope ever be theological, supernatural, and meritorious.

CHAPTER II.

ON WHAT MOTIVES OUR HOPE SHOULD BE BASED.

72. I OBSERVED at the outset that theological hope raises our will to the expectation of immortal and ever-enduring blessings, the will being moved thereto by the promises of a God Who is infinitely

* Sur., In Vitâ, 8 Januar. † Idem, In Vitâ, 6 Febr.

powerful and sovereignly faithful; these being in very deed the two motives which awaken hope within the soul, and the two shining torches, as it were, which kindle and invigorate it in our breasts. We will now examine the force and the power these motives exercise over our hearts. It is so certain that God has promised everlasting salvation to him who, keeping the commandments, shall persevere in grace unto death, that it can be called in question by no one who has faith. *He that shall persevere unto the end*, says Christ, *shall be saved.** We have the same assurance that God has promised to afford to every one the help needed for keeping His commandments, as we have that the Gospel—which contains the clear, unmistakable record of these promises—cannot lie. I will instance one such passage among thousands that might be alleged. *I say to you* (it is Christ Who speaks), *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*†. Promises so clear and so express need no commentary. Nevertheless, our Blessed Lord, in order to render them more effectual for the stirring up of hope in the hearts of His believers, illustrates them with a most convincing comparison. *If a son ask his father bread, will he give him a stone? or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion?*‡ And Jesus concludes in these terms: *If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him?*§ Which means, that the spiritual help needed in order to serve God faithfully and to attain to everlasting bliss, will always be granted if asked for.

* Qui perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit. Matth. x. 22.

† Ego dico vobis: petite, et dabitur vobis; quærite, et invenietis; pulsate, et aperietur vobis. Omnis enim qui petit, accipit; et qui quærit, invenit; et pulsanti aperietur. Luc. xj. 9.

‡ Quis enim ex vobis, patrem petit panem; numquid lapidem dabit illi? aut piscem; numquid serpentem dabit illi? aut si petierit ovum; numquid porriget illi scorpionem? Ibid. xj. 12.

§ Si ergo vos, cum sitis mali, nostis bona data dare filiis vestris, quanto magis pater vester dabit spiritum bonum petentibus se?

73. Since, then, God has so clearly promised eternal salvation and the grace to attain it, what heart can be so hardened as not to expand with a lively hope of such unspeakable blessings on hearing these promises of the Almighty, ever true to His word? We must either refuse to God the possession of the two above-named great attributes—I mean, almighty power and sovereign faithfulness, thinking God to be unable or unwilling to redeem His promise—or else, if we hold Him to be almighty and faithful, we must needs yield to these infallible promises, by hoping for His gracious help here below, and for unspeakable bliss in the life to come.

74. I will make this plainer by two instances, which are well suited to the matter in hand. Charles V. went to visit one of his favourites, who was at the point of death. On entering the sick-chamber, he approached the bed, but instead of rejoicing at this visit of his sovereign, who came thus to honour him with his presence, the countenance of the sick man fell, and he burst into tears. The emperor, seeing his grief, asked the man to acquaint him with the cause of his sorrow. "For I am come," he said, "to bring you comfort. Can I do anything for you? Speak freely, and I pledge my royal word to grant whatever you may ask." "I would beg your Majesty," replied the dying man, "to prolong my life by a single hour." "But," said the emperor, "that is out of my power." Then the courtier, with sad countenance and eyes bathed in tears, turned his face to the wall and gave vent to these mournful words: "Oh! that I might begin life anew!" "What would you do in that case?" asked the emperor. "I would serve," was the answer, "no one but the Sovereign Lord, in Whose hands are life and death." As may be seen, the promises of the prince were not wanting to this ill-fated courtier, nor was the monarch otherwise than most willing to make them good, but he had not the power, and so the unhappy man was baulked of his expectations.

75. Joseph was in the prison of Egypt, and had for fellow in captivity the cup-bearer of Pharaoh. The Hebrew youth foresaw in a dream the speedy deliverance of this officer, and while imparting to him the welcome news, besought him, on his return to

court, to intercede with the king and establish his innocence. The cup-bearer gave the required promise, but amid the bustle of the palace and the prosperity of his career let it slip from his mind, and never uttered a syllable on behalf of justice.* In this case, the ungrateful officer had the opportunity and the means of making good his promise to Joseph, by calling the attention of Pharaoh to his innocence, but as he failed in faithfulness, the hope of the falsely-accused prisoner was delusive.

76. Now God wants not the power to fulfil His promises, as nothing that He can wish can ever go beyond the sphere of His power.† Neither can He be unfaithful in fulfilling His promises, as He Himself assures us that the heavens shall melt away, the earth be shivered into countless fragments, before He, the ever-true and all-faithful One, shall be wanting to His least word.‡ If, then, a God of boundless power, of unchangeable will, of unswerving faithfulness, has promised us everlasting bliss and the means of securing it, what more certain or more powerful motives can our will have to rise by a confirmed hope to these infinite blessings, as well as to the help needed for the attainment of them?

77. But though the two foregoing motives are all-sufficient to awaken theological hope within us—nay, more, are the very grounds whereon it and its affections rest, we are by no means forbidden to intensify our hope by availing ourselves of other motives. We may thus take, as further motives of our hope of grace and glory, the goodness of God, whereby He is infinitely inclined to bestow on us His favours and His mercy; a goodness which moves Him to take pity on our miseries. We may also enliven our hope by calling to mind the bitter Passion of our Saviour, His torments, the blood of infinite price shed to the last drop for us. Nevertheless, if we look well into the matter, these various motives will be found implied in God's magnificent

* Succedentibus prosperis, præpositus pincernarum oblitus est interpretis sui. Genes. xl. 23.

† Deus autem noster in cœlo, omnia quæcumque voluit, fecit. Ps. cxiij. 3.

‡ Cœlum et terra transibunt, verba autem mea non præteribunt. Matth. xxiv. 35.

promises to us. And of a truth, of what greater goodness could God give proof to us, than to promise to such vile creatures as ourselves blessings so sublime, so far surpassing our mean nature; and since strength to attain such happiness is wanting to us, He supplies us, as with a ladder, with so many helps to enable us to scale these lofty heights. What greater mercy than to promise to thankless, guilty, sinful, thoughtless creatures, such as we are, not only pardon for so many treasons, but His grace, His friendship, and a share in His own happiness? More than this, how magnificently does the Passion of our loving Redeemer shine out amidst the splendour of His promises! And wherefore, think you, has God pledged Himself to give us so many supernatural and divine blessings in the present and future life? Is it out of regard for our deserts? Why, we not only had no merits of our own, but, on the contrary, the greatest unworthiness was to be found in us. The promise of these unspeakable gifts is made to us in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Who has earned them for us with His Blood. Hence I infer, that although it is praiseworthy to avail one's self of these motives, since they help to quicken hope within us, yet the specific motives of this theological virtue are the promises of the almighty and faithful God; and this both because they steady the will, so that it cannot waver, or be tossed about by anxious misgiving in its expectation of the good in store for it, and because they contain all the other motives of which we have hitherto been treating.

78. The reader may now understand why God is so frequently addressed in the inspired writings as our Hope. The Psalmist says: *O Lord God, Thou art my hope from my youth.** And again, *Thou hast led me, for Thou hast been a hope to me.*† And Jeremias writes: *Thou, O Lord, art my hope in the time of affliction.*‡ The Apostle of the Gentiles, too, says: *Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.*§ The Sacred Writings use such language

* Domine, spes mea a juventute mea. Ps. lxx. 5.

† Deduxisti me, quia factus es spes mea. Ps. lx. 4.

‡ Spes mea tu in die afflictionis. Jerem. xvij. 17.

§ Paulus Apostolus secundum imperium Dei salvatoris nostri, et Christi Jesu spei nostræ. I. ad Tim. i.

as the above, because hope is a virtue wholly grounded in God. It aspires to God, and is moved by Him thus to aspire, because its motive force is to be found in the attributes of His almighty power and of His sovereign faithfulness, which, in substance, are God Himself. Hence it is a virtue wholly divine, that deifies the souls in which it dwells.

CHAPTER III.

THE PROPERTIES OF THIS THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE.

79. THE first property of theological hope is that its reliance be on God alone, for God alone is the giver of every best gift. *The Lord is my rock, my refuge, my deliverer, my helper, my buckler, in Him will I trust,** says the Prophet-king. And in another place, excluding all expectation of aid on the part of any creature whatsoever, he says: *Better is it to hope in the Lord than to trust in man.*† Better is it to hope in the Lord than to put one's trust in creatures, however powerful, high-placed and rich they may be.

80. The Angelic Doctor examines whether it be lawful to put our hopes in men, and he answers, that as the sole object of our hope is eternal bliss, with the means needed for its attainment (as was laid down in the preceding Chapters), it is not lawful to expect great goods at the hands of men, considered as primary causes, but that we may place our hopes in them as instrumental causes, in other words, as the instruments God makes use of to lead us to everlasting blessedness; which is as much as to say that our hope should all be centred in God, since the reliance we place on the instrument terminates in him that sets it in motion.‡

* Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum, et liberator meus, Deus meus, adjutor meus, et sperabo in eum. Ps. xij. 3.

† Bonum est confidere in Domino, quam confidere in homine. Bonum est sperare in Domino, quam sperare in principibus. Ps. cxvij. 8, 9.

‡ Non licet sperare de aliquo homine, vel de aliquâ creaturâ, sicut de primâ

I ask, would it not be folly to expect a good picture from the brush of Apelles, or a finished statue from the chisel of Phidias? Unquestionably, since these were the instruments only, and hence not the principal causes, of the masterpieces of those eminent artists. It would be quite as foolish to think that hope is to be put in men, instead of in God, the primary Cause and Source of all the good to which we may lay claim.

81. Nor will it do to object that St Thomas is here dealing with theological hope, which is concerned only with heavenly gifts, and not with that natural hope which has merely natural blessings in view, since the reasons alleged by the holy Doctor avail equally for both. God is the Giver of natural no less than of supernatural gifts, and makes use of His creatures as instruments in the distribution of both one and the other. Being, then, the Author of every good gift, whether in the order of nature or in that of grace, we should look for every blessing to Him alone, as to the fountain-head whence they all flow. Hence St Basil, speaking in general, and without any limitation, says, "that as he who puts his hope in men is to be shunned and abhorred, so is he most praiseworthy and, even here below, most blessed, whose hope is placed solely in God and, in every circumstance, depends on His most righteous ordinances."*

82. The holy Bishop Fronto, having been persecuted by the Governor Squirius, who was an enemy to the Christian name, was forced to leave his episcopal city with seventy monks, and, to retire into a desert, solitary place. These good Religious, being out of the reach of all human aid, began to complain of the holy Bishop for having taken them to starve in the wilderness. Without allowing himself to be troubled by their complaints, the Saint put all his hope in God, and encouraged the monks to cast

causâ movente in beatitudinem. Licet autem sperare de aliquo homine, vel de aliquâ creaturâ, sicut de aliquo agente secundario, et instrumentali, per quem aliquis adjuvatur ad quæcumque bona consequenda ad beatitudinem ordinata. 2, 2, quæst. 17, art. 3.

* Beatus qui omni spe rerum hujusmodi seipsum orbavit, in solo Deo omnem spem fixit, atque locavit suam. Sicut enim execrandus est ille homo, qui spem suam habet in homine; ita omni laude dignus, qui ex Deo totus pendet. Orat. 7, De Virt. et Vitio.

themselves on the Almighty's providential care. That very night the Lord sent an Angel to Squirius, ordering him to send the necessary provisions to His servants abiding in the desert, and threatening him with severe punishment if he failed or delayed to obey. The Governor, all in a fright, made diligent inquiries as to where Fronto might have retired with his companions, and, not having succeeded in his search, gave up all thought of sending the fugitives the provisions they needed. The following night the Angel returned with the same message and the like threats. Hereupon Squirius adopted the course of loading seventy mules with provisions, and letting them go without driver or guide to the place where He who had given the order might choose to send them. Thus did it come to pass, that the animals, journeying along those desert places, reached of themselves the gate of the hermitage where the holy Bishop and his monks had taken shelter, and there halted, as if to lay at their feet the provisions sent them by the Governor of the city.*

83. In this case the provisions came immediately from Squirius; but it is obvious that they were sent by God, since the Governor was the instrument, while God was the first cause of their receiving so acceptable a present. It is the like with us when we receive any benefit for soul or body at our neighbours' hands, though it may not come to us in a way so clearly miraculous as it did in the case of these monks. We receive help from men, and favours, and benefactions. But who is it that moves them, and with a wondrous providence so orders things that our fellow-men single us out to do good to us? Who but God? He, then, is the first Mover, the primary Cause thereof. To Him, therefore, should we ascribe all the good that falls to our lot; in Him placing all our hope, casting ourselves into the arms of His most loving providence: as St Peter exhorts us in his first Epistle.†

84. Still less are we to put our hope in ourselves, as if we were able to avoid all faults, to keep unsullied innocence, to practise virtue, and to win an eternal crown. Wherefore the Apostle warns

* Vinc. Bellovac., Spec. Hist., lib. ix., cap. 34.

† Omnem sollicitudinem in eum projicientes: quoniam ipsi cura est de vobis. I. Petr. v. 7

us not to rely upon ourselves, but on God,* for to hope in ourselves is to lean on a broken reed, which soon gives way and makes us fall. That is to say, it is to lean on a very weak support, since we are unable of ourselves to do the least holy and meritorious act, and are of our nature most inclined to every kind of wickedness. Hence we can expect nothing of ourselves but the most disastrous falls, which will end in perdition: *Thy perdition is from thee, O Israel*, says the Lord, by the mouth of the Prophet Osea; for of ourselves we have but sin and perdition: *In Me alone is thy help.*† Whence it follows that we must put our hope in God alone, if we would not perish but reach the haven of everlasting salvation.

85. However, in order to the fuller understanding of this doctrine, it must be borne in mind that in the stormy sea of this life on which we are tossed, there are to be met with two rocks whereon countless persons strike and make shipwreck. One is a vain and groundless hope, the other is diffidence and despair. Whoso vainly confides in his own puny strength (whereby it is impossible for him to attain happiness) strikes on the former of these rocks. He runs on the latter who gives up hope and, on that account, falls into diffidence. But if, descending into a lower deep, he should consider impossible the attainment of that good which must be desired, then he falls into despair; as St Thomas notices in his description of this abject and cowardly affection.‡ The safe middle course between these two fatal extremes is wholly to distrust ourselves, and to place all our hopes on God alone. Thus only may we expect to reach unscathed the shores of endless joy. It is to this that St Jerome alludes when he says, "Rely not on thy wisdom, virtue, or talent, but on God alone; for He it is Who directs thy footsteps in thy pilgrimage to thy heavenly home."§ This, then, is the first property of theological hope;

* Non simus fidentes in nobis, sed in Deo. II. ad Cor. i. 9.

† Perditio tua, Israel; tantummodo in me auxilium tuum. Oseæ xiij. 9.

‡ Desperatio non importat solam privationem spei; sed importat quemdam recessum a re desideratâ propter æstimatam impossibilitatem adipiscendi. 2. 2, quæst. 40, art. 4, ad. 3.

§ Salomon loquitur: *Esto confidens in Domino toto corde tuo; in tuâ autem sapientiâ ne exalteris: in omnibus viis tuis cognosce eum, ut rectas faciat vias*

it leans on no creature whatsoever, not even on self, but on God alone.

86. The second property of true hope is the certain and established expectation of unfailing bliss, as well as of the means necessary for its attainment. For Christian hope being moored to the infallible promises of God, cannot be unsteady in its affections. St Paul, with a design to encourage the Hebrew converts to aspire to eternal blessedness, sets before them the example of Abraham, who held a firm and stable hope in the promises God had made to him, promises confirmed with an oath.* The Apostle says that hope is a strong and trusty anchor for him that aspires to get within the veil; to attain, in other words, the beatific vision of our God, now veiled and hidden from our eyes. For in truth, amid the divers fluctuations of feeling, this it is which steadies our soul in the Lord, and keeps it constant to the practice of virtue. St Paul alleges two reasons for the assurance and fixedness which are exhibited in the virtue of hope: the first of which is the promise made to us by God. For, as an anchor, if it find a sandy or shifting bottom, cannot keep a ship from drifting, while if it get a hold of a rock it makes the vessel fast and safe when floating on the depths of the sea; so too hope, by laying hold of the promises of God (which are more immovable than any rock, even were it of adamant), renders the soul most certain of the goods it looks for, and keeps it, tossed though it be on the stormy ocean of this life, fixed in God, and constant in doing good.

87. The second reason alleged by the Apostle of the Gentiles is, that Jesus Christ has entered before us as our forerunner within the mystic veil of the Divine Presence; that is, He is gone

tuas. Intellige quid loquitur. Nec in sapientiâ tuâ, nec in ullis virtutibus confidendum, sed in solo Domino, a quo *gressus hominis diriguntur.* Lib. iij. Adversus Pelagianos.

* In quo abundantius volens Deus ostendere pollicitationis hæredibus immobilitatem consilii sui, interposuit jusjurandum: ut per duas res immobiles, quibus impossibile est mentiri Deum, fortissimum solatium habeamus, qui confugimus ad tenendam propositam spem; quam sicut anchoram habemus animæ tutam, et firmam, et incedentem usque ad interiora velaminis: ubi præcursor pro nobis introivit Jesus, secundum ordinem Melchisedec pontifex factus in æternum. Ad Hebr. vj.

beforehand into the heavenly country to prepare us a place, and there, as our High Priest according to the order of Melchisedech, is ever making intercession for us; or, as the Apostle puts it more clearly in the following Chapter, Jesus acts as our Advocate, ever living to plead on our behalf.* And this, too, as none can help seeing, is a motive which adds greatly to the solidity of our hope since we have in Heaven an Advocate so anxious for our salvation, and so mighty to obtain it by the influence of His pleading, and by the spectacle of the wounds which His love inflicted upon Him.

88. Vincent of Beauvais relates,† that St Machutus having to spend the solemn festival of Easter at sea, wanted to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice, at which his companions were no less desirous of being present. He therefore anxiously scanned the horizon, in order to discover some point of land, but could see nothing save sky and water. All at once there appeared in sight a small islet, not unlike a rock which stands out of the water. They, imagining that it would form a convenient spot for the celebration of the divine mysteries, made for it at once. On arriving at it, they each and every one disembarked, and then they erected a small altar, whereon St Machutus began to say Mass. They had just got as far as the Lord's Prayer, when to their terror the islet began to move, and in such manner as to make them aware that it was not a rocky point, as they had imagined, but the back of a whale which, floating on the surface of the sea, kept the upper portion of its body above the water. The bystanders being terrified at the imminent danger they were in of being submerged, cried aloud to Heaven, and prepared at once to jump on board. Not so Machutus who, undisturbed and with firm hope in God, remained undaunted in this great danger.‡ He exhorted his companions, by the example of Jonas, to put their hope also in God. Wonderful to relate, this steady hope of the Saint arrested every movement of the monster—I had almost said of the living mountain of flesh—and rendered it as motionless as if it really had been

* Unde salvare in perpetuum potest accedentes per semetipsum ad Deum, semper vivens ad interpellandum pro nobis. Ad Hebr. vij. 25.

† Lib. xxi., cap. 98.

‡ Vir Dei fidens in Domino, interritus persistit.

a rock or an island. Thus was the Saint enabled to finish the Holy Sacrifice, and, with all his companions, to re-embark in safety. As soon as all were on board, the enormous beast plunged beneath the waves in the sight of all, and was never seen again.

89. The settled hope of St Machutus and his companions rendered this great whale, though naturally endowed with motion, as motionless as a rock on the surface of the waters. So too will hope in God steady the human heart, of its own nature so inconstant, and, amid the storms of this wretched life, keep it immovable in virtue. Hence St Augustine, speaking of the firmness proper to our hope, might well say, that relying as it does on the promises of a God Who can neither deceive nor be deceived, it renders us no less assured of the things hoped for than if we had already attained them.*

90. If you wish for a striking instance of such steadfastness, hearken to the inspired Psalmist: *Though armies should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should arise against me, in this will I trust.*† Listen to holy Job: *Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,*‡ for such was the assurance wherewith his hope in the Lord inspired his heart, that he expected life to be again restored to him by God. And the Apostle of the Gentiles exclaims: *I am certain that neither life, nor death, nor things in heaven, nor things on earth, can separate me from the love of God.*§ But whence this great assurance, this certainty amid the many uncertainties of the present life? The Apostle makes answer: "The very steadfastness of my hope is my earnest that it shall never be disappointed."‖ And such ought to be the firmness with which we are to look for the supernatural blessings of divine grace and heavenly glory; and it will surely be such, if we uniformly rely on the promises of the true and almighty God.

* Spes nostra tam certa est, quasi jam res perfecta sit; neque enim timemus promittente veritate: veritas enim nec potest falli, nec fallere. In. Ps. cxxiij.

† Si consistant adversus me castra, non timebit cor meum. Si exsurgat adversus me prælium, in hoc ego sperabo. Ps. xxvj. 3.

‡ Etiamsi occiderit me, in ipso sperabo. Job. xiij. 15.

§ Certus sum quia neque mors, neque vita, neque angeli, neque principatus, etc., poterit nos separare a caritate Dei, quæ est in Christo Jesu. Rom. viij. 38.

‖ Spes enim non confundit.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THIRD PROPERTY OF HOPE.

91. THE third property of hope consists in the union of a wholesome fear with the assured expectation of supernatural blessings. As Solomon says: "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence."* And the Book of Ecclesiasticus exhorts them that fear the Lord to hope in Him, implying thereby that godly fear predisposes to hope, which, in its turn, by no means excludes holy fear.† So true is this, that to induce us to join hope with fear, the Psalmist says: *The Lord takes delight in those that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy*,‡ that is to say, the Lord loves such as know how to unite the two sentiments of supernatural hope and fear.

92. Nor should this surprise us, for these two affections, though distinct, are not opposed to each other, but can well co-exist in the same heart, since they are awakened by different motives. Hope is stirred up within us by God's infallible promises, and by His goodness ever ready to shower down gifts upon us; and by such comforting motives is it encouraged to aspire to the enjoyment of the Sovereign Good. Fear, on the other hand, is produced by the consideration of our own nothingness, insufficiency, weakness, faults, shortcomings, and inborn propensities, which incline us to evil; all which motives inspire the soul with distrust of self, and keep us in humility and lowly-mindedness. Hope raises us to God, fear makes us shrink within ourselves. The former virtue spurs on the soul to action, the latter renders it cautious and watchful. "He that hopes without fearing," says St Augustine, "will grow heedless on account of excessive security; he that fears, but hopes not, falls into discouragement by dejection of soul, and runs the risk of being thrown headlong into the slough of despair. O holy hope! thou enablest us to bear everything

* In timore Domini fiducia fortitudinis. Prov. xiv. 26.

† Qui timetis Dominum, sperate in illum. Ecclus. xj. 19.

‡ Beneplacitum est Domino super timentes eum, et in eis, qui sperant super misericordia ejus. Ps. cxlvj. 11.

with patience and meekness. Wherefore, brethren," continues the Holy Doctor, "love this virtue, strive to obtain and preserve it, yet so that it be not dissociated from divine fear, lest, devoid of fear, ye fall into heedlessness or, failing in hope, ye yield to pusillanimity and lowness of heart, with danger of falling into the abyss."* Thus may the reader perceive how needful it is to blend together both these sentiments in our heart, so that each may serve as a counterpoise to the other, and may help us to advance with courage, yet with caution, on the road to heaven.

93. St Bernard inculcates the same spiritual lesson when treating of these two affections. He observes, that "Fear of God's judgments, apart from hope, casts us down into the pit of despair; while indiscreet hope, unmixed with a reasonable fear, engenders a hurtful security."† Whereas, by the union of these two virtues, the soul is rendered steady and safe in the way of salvation and perfection; for hope strengthens it to go forward, while fear makes it take heed to its steps lest it fall into some vain presumption.

94. A ship, to make its way in safety across the seas, requires wind to propel it, and ballast to give it weight and to cause it to have the needful draught of water. If the wind fail, the vessel lies a log on the sea; when not properly ballasted, its own lightness exposes it to be capsized. So, too, a devout person, in order to go to God in safety, has need of the breath of hope to propel him towards good, and must also be steadied by fear, as with ballast, making him sink deep into the feeling of his own miseries, and thus keeping him in lowly sentiments of humility. If a man be wanting in the ballast of filial fear, his own unsteadiness and vanity will drive him to make shipwreck by some grievous sin. If the favourable wind of hope fail him, he will remain motionless and without energy, and will lose all power for any good deed.

* O spes, tu omnia portare facis dulciter et suaviter! Eia ergo, Fratres, hanc amate, hanc tenete, non tamen sine timore, quia qui sperat, et non timet, negligens est: qui autem timet, et non sperat, depressus est, et descendit in profundum, quasi lapsis. Serm. 10, Ad Fratres in Eremo.

† Alterum sine altero osculari non expedit, quia et recordatio solius judicii in baratrum desperationis præcipitat, et misericordiæ fallax assentatio pessimam generat securitatem. Serm. 6, in Cantica.

But if he have both virtues, hope to push him onwards, and fear to make him preserve his balance, he will make sail in all safety towards his heavenly country.

95. A spiritual man should, therefore, imitate that Angel of the Apocalypse, who stood with one foot upon the land and with the other on the sea. With one foot should he take his stand on God's unchangeable promises, on God's boundless mercy and goodness. This foot will be planted on the land, that is, on a firm and solid foundation, whence it will be firm, steady, immovable. The other foot should be placed in the sea of his own miseries, and will, of course, be less secure. Thus will one foot balance the other, and secure it from falling into any guilty extreme. In a word, hope must not cast out fear, but render the soul humble, moderate, and calm; fear, in its turn, must not deaden hope, or deprive it of its firmness, but must communicate to it modesty, prudence, and circumspection.

CHAPTER V.

THE EFFECTS PRODUCED IN THE SOUL BY HOPE.

96. THE first effect of hope is to enlarge the heart, to inspire it with a readiness to keep all the commandments of God, and make it strive after Christian perfection. The Psalmist bears witness to this effect from his own experience: *I ran in the way of Thy commandments when Thou didst enlarge my heart.**

97. This will be obvious to any one who reflects on the way in which hope and fear are developed within us. Fear is a pusillanimous sentiment, since it drives back the blood and vital spirits to the heart. Whenever any great peril becomes imminent, the vital spirits forsake the outlying parts and muster for the defence of the citadel, which is the heart, the principal seat of life; on this account the outer members of the body become wan and

* Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum. Ps. cxiij. 32.

feeble; they tremble, and are unfit for action. Hope, on the contrary, enlarges the heart, diffuses the vital spirits throughout the external organs, and thus enables them to do what is necessary for the attainment of the good after which it aspires. Fear contracts, closes up the heart, like a general of an army who shuts his troops up in the fortress he wishes to hold; hope enlarges and opens it, after the fashion of a leader who goes out courageously with his forces on some military exploit. Whence it may be inferred, that no sentiment so fits men for great deeds as a lively hope; a fact of which we have daily experience in the common occurrences of life.

98. Witness, for instance, the merchant who takes ship, crosses the tempestuous ocean, exposes himself to violent gales, and defies, so to speak, the howling storms that rage about him. Ask him why he trusts his life to a few frail planks in the midst of a stormy sea? He will reply, that his motive is the hope of gain. Look, too, at the boldness wherewith the soldier rushes on thousands of lances, throws himself on the sword's point, and dauntlessly dashes in wherever he sees the thickest of the fight amid slaughter and bloodshed. Ask him why he thus holds his life so cheap? He will answer that he is animated by the hope of victory. Question the artisan amid the toil of the workshop, the student poring over his books, the labourer watering the soil with his sweat—they will all reply, that their toil and labour are undergone either for the hope of money or knowledge or of a plenteous harvest. Now, if hope can impart such energy for the acquirement of earthly advantages, how much more active will it not be for the attainment of everlasting goods which are infinitely more precious? If the hope that aims only at passing goods can so enlarge the heart and steel it against difficulties and dangers, how much more will not the hope of the highest and never-fading goods avail to dilate our hearts and make them most willing to keep God's precepts, even in what thwarts our corrupt nature, and to observe them with great perfection; nay, to undertake works of supererogation which are not prescribed by God's law? Holy David exhorts to manful and hearty action;* but take

* Viriliter agite, et confortetur cor vestrum, omnes qui speratis in Domino. Ps. xxx. 25.

notice that he addresses this appeal to such as put their trust in God, knowing full well, as he did, that none can act thus unless they are moved by great hope. He, then, who places but little trust in God cannot expect to make great progress in perfection.

99. We read in the Chronicles of the Friars-Minor,* that a youth of noble birth and of a delicate constitution, having taken the Franciscan habit, started on his religious course with great fervour and earnestness; but by slow degrees his devotion cooled down, and he began to find the coarse habit irksome, to hold the fasts and other austerities in abhorrence, and to look upon religious life as an insufferable burden. He soon ended by laying aside every virtuous practice, and determined at length to leave the cloister, and return to the freedom of secular life. Now observe the means God employed to rouse this torpid soul and spur it on to run, as of old, in the path of perfection. The very night he had resolved to cast off the holy habit, he chanced to pass before an altar on which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved, and falling on his knees, he bowed down in lowly adoration. In this posture he was taken up in the spirit, and allowed to behold a wondrous sight. He saw a procession of heavenly personages, all richly clad, from whose shining countenances there beamed a radiance passing that of the sun, yet cheering rather than dazzling to the eye. Among the number were two spirits who surpassed all the rest in brightness, majesty, and comeliness; and the procession closed with one who was decked in glory and led, as it were in triumph, by this goodly company. At this glorious spectacle the novice was astonished and filled with an unspeakable sweetness; nor could he refrain from asking one of the company who these bright souls might be. He was told that they were Friars-Minor going up to heaven; that the two so conspicuous for their majesty and glory were St Francis and St Antony of Padua, and that he who brought up the rear was a Friar who had just died, and was being led with all this magnificent pomp into Paradise. On hearing this, the heart of the novice kindled with so lively and ardent a hope of

* Part. 2, lib. xi., cap. 25.

attaining the like glory, that, on coming to himself, he felt that all his former repugnance to penance, and all feeling of the irksomeness of religious observance, had utterly vanished from his breast. His coarse habit now felt to him soft, he found a relish in the most rigorous fasts, the most severe poverty had charms for him. Sweet to him were mortifications, humiliations, prayer, obedience; in a word, religious life, which had hitherto appeared so hard to him, became all at once easy and pleasant. He returned with great earnestness to his holy exercises, in which he remained constant till his dying day. This may help to prove that nothing so invigorates the heart, however lukewarm and careless, nothing so expands and spurs it on to works of perfection, as a strong hope. Wherefore we may say, with holy David, "Let us look forward to heavenly gifts, and thus strengthen and dilate our heart to work with manly energy."*

100. The second effect of hope is the consolation and gladness which accrue from it to him that hopes. The Apostle exhorts the Romans *to rejoice in hope.*† And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he says: *We have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.*‡ The Book of Ecclesiasticus also exhorts souls that fear the Lord to hope in Him, and tells us that from His mercy an exceeding joy will overflow into our hearts.§

101. What marvel that the hope of everlasting goods should prove a source of consolation, when the prospect of those of earth can so gladden the heart? What other solace has the poor sufferer parched by fever, amid all the incommodities of sickness, but the hope of health? What other comfort has the poor captive or bondsman, in the dungeon and loaded with fetters, but to look forward to his longed-for liberty? And he that is pursued by the injustice and slander of jealous rivals, what else can

* Expecta Dominum, viriliter age, et confortetur cor tuum, et sustine Dominum. Ps. xxvj. 11.

† Spe gaudentes. Rom. xij. 12.

‡ Fortissimum solatium habeamus, qui confugimus ad tenendam propositam spem. Hebr. vj. 18.

§ Qui timetis Dominum, sperate in illum: et in oblectationem veniet vobis misericordia. Eccl. ij. 9.

assuage his pains but the hope of having his fair fame vindicated? *Rejoice then*, says the royal Prophet, *all ye that trust in the Lord*,* for far more than worldlings have such just cause for gathering from their Hope the fruit of unalloyed gladness.

102. St Augustine, commenting on those words of the Psalm, *The labours of thy hands shalt thou eat*,† starts the question how our toils can be eaten, in other words, how we can relish them; for it would seem that we should look rather to enjoy the fruit of our labours than the labours themselves. Thus the peasant feeds not on his sweat, for he waters the soil therewith while delving it with hoe and ploughshare, but he eats the fruits of his sweat in the harvest-time. His answer is this,—at present we spend ourselves in labour, but the time will come when we are to enjoy its fruits. But yet, as our very efforts are full of contentment and joy, by reason of our hope of the fruits they will bear, our fatigues are so sweetened by this hope that we may be said to find a relish even in our labours. The holy Doctor gathers from this a consequence no less obvious than useful, — namely, that if our struggles can so gladden us by the present hope of the fruit to come, with what joy shall we not overflow when we shall secure the fruits themselves! ‡

103. There occurs to me an anecdote which may serve as an apt illustration of this point. Two noblemen having called at an out-of-the-way monastery, chanced, while going round the cells of the good Religious, to enter that of a venerable monk, whose hair was as white as a swan's plumage,—whose countenance was joyous as an Angel's,—whose mien was calm and gentle beyond what may be described.§ At seeing him, his visitors were amazed and, so to speak, beside themselves with wonder, being unable to understand how the cheerfulness with

* Lætentur omnes, qui sperant in te, Domine. Ps. v. 12.

† Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis. Ps. cxxvij. 2.

‡ Modo labores habemus, fructus postea erit. Sed quia et ipsi labores non sunt sine gaudio propter spem, de quâ paulo ante diximus: spe gaudentes, in tribulatione patientes: modo nos ipsi labores jucundant, et lætos faciunt de spe. Si ergo labor noster potuit jucundare manducaturos, fructus ipsius laboris qualis erit? In Ps. cxxvij.

§ Rossig. Verità Eterne, lect. 14, sec. 2.

which the countenance of the monk was shining could be compatible with the coarseness of his garb and the austerity of his life. But they wondered still more when they had heard him speak ; for he discoursed of neavenly things with such familiarity and sweetness that the joy reflected in his countenance was a sign of that with which his heart abounded. While he was thus sweetly conversing, one of the two nobles asked him whether in the whole course of his life he had experienced affliction or sadness of heart? "Many a time and often," replied the saintly old man, "have fits of melancholy arisen to assail my poor heart. But thanks to God, Who has always vouchsafed to me a ready and ever-present remedy which changes sorrow into gladness, I have but to go to that lattice, and I at once behold what gives me strength and comfort." On hearing this, one of the noblemen went to look at the window, and finding nothing but a rough wall which barred the prospect, and even hindered the free view of the sky, he said, "How now, I can see nothing here to give comfort." "But look a little more closely, and you will see something most comforting," said the monk. "For my part," rejoined the other, "I can see only a few inches of sky through a chink of this poorly-built wall." That is just what gives me comfort," said the monk. "When melancholy seizes upon me, I have merely to look at this patch of sky, and directly there is awakened within me a sweet hope of those everlasting goods, which so fills me with joy, that the clouds of sadness melt into a sunshine of consolation and peace." Even as he spoke there welled up from his heart a shower of joyous tears, which forced him to break off his discourse. He became silent, and his silence bore unmistakable witness to the depth of the joy that springs from the hope of eternal bliss, and to its great utility for enabling the soul to make progress in perfection, since such hope extinguishes bitterness, wearisomeness, disgust, sadness and repugnances; which are all so many grievous hindrances to our spiritual growth.

CHAPTER VI.

A FURTHER RESULT OF SUPERNATURAL HOPE.

104. Our frail nature never so betrays its weakness as when under the pressure of trial, pain, and anguish, especially if the severity of our suffering be aggravated by its intensity, or if it become irksome by its long continuance, or terrible by the threat of approaching death. Under such circumstances it stands in need of a virtue which may strengthen it to encounter evils so grievous and difficult to endure. Hope is the virtue which works these effects within us; for by expanding the heart it imparts courage wherewith to face suffering, and consoling us by its soothing influence, tempers the grief which the presence of evil causes it to feel, making us gentle and patient.

105. And, in fact, we read in Holy Scripture, that whenever God wants to encourage His servants to fortitude under great afflictions, He appeals to hope, and stirs it up within them by reminding them of the recompense in store. Thus St Paul, to animate the Romans under persecution, sets before them the consideration of that eternal kingdom which God has prepared for His courageous soldiers, — *If we suffer with Him* (Christ), *we shall be glorified with Him.** And contrasting the sufferings of this life with the reward to come, he shows that our tribulations are not to be compared with the immortal glory in store for us in Heaven, in order that, by the hope of this glory, we may gain courage to be patient under affliction.† The same Apostle seeing the Corinthians made a butt of fierce persecution, arms them to endurance with the shield of hope, reminding them that present trials are the seed of that most delicious fruit which they will never cease to enjoy in a blissful eternity.‡ Elsewhere he

* Si compatimur, ut et glorificemur. Rom. viij. 17.

† Non sunt condignæ passiones hujus temporis ad futuram gloriam quæ revelabitur in nobis. Ibid. viij. 18.

‡ In præsenti momentaneum, et leve tribulationis nostræ supra modum in sublimitate æternum gloriæ pondus operatur in nobis. II. ad Corinth. iv. 17.

holds up to the gaze of the faithful the crown of never-waning stars that is to be the guerdon of their sufferings, and that this thought may the more efficaciously inspire them with great courage, he contrasts it with that fading crown to attain which the athletes denied themselves every pleasure of sense.*

106. Well, then, might the Prophet Isaias exclaim, *In silence and hope shall be your strength;* well may he assure us that they who trust in God shall gain fortitude in suffering, that they shall take to themselves wings and like soaring eagles pursue their flight unwearied, press onward, and yet not feel fatigue, since their hope shall invigorate them, imparting courage and strength to fly upwards to the most sublime heights of perfection in spite of every obstacle.†

107. And in proof hereof, whence, think you, sprang that wondrous fortitude and dauntless courage shown by the martyrs amid the gleam of swords and axes, or when on the rack, or torn with iron combs, set on red-hot gridirons, placed in boiling cauldrons and raging furnaces? You imagine, perhaps, that their flesh was of brass, and their bones of flint; that they were callous to the sting of pain? Certainly not, for they too were fashioned of frail flesh as we are, and were no less than we endowed with, and capable of feeling, the sharp pang of bitter torment. Their hope of everlasting joys made them strong and dauntless amid the most awful sufferings, the most appalling tortures. This it was that made them heedless of the threats of tyrants, of the fierce looks of their executioners, of the dread engines of torture; this nerved them to look death in the face; this assuaged the smart of their wounds, and made them exclaim with the Psalmist, "I trust in God, to whom I look for a share in His everlasting delights, hence I flinch not, nor do I tremble."‡

108. Our Blessed Lord Himself, wishing to steel the heart of Stephen, the first martyr, against the onslaught of an infuriated

* Qui in agone contendit, ab omnibus se abstinet: et illi quidem ut corruptibilem coronam accipiant, nos autem incorruptam. II. ad Corinth. ix. 25.

† In silentio et in spe erit fortitudo vestra. . . . . Qui sperant in Domino, mutabunt fortitudinem, assument pennas, sicut aquilæ; current, et non laborabunt; ambulabunt, et non deficient. Isai. xxx. 15; xl. 31.

‡ In Domino sperans non infirmabor. Ps. xxv. 1.

rabble, which assailed him with stones, made use of no other means than a steadfast hope. The Heavens were open to the gaze of the holy Deacon, and it was given to him to behold his Saviour on the throne of His glory, His hands laden with garlands and palm branches wherewith to crown the constancy of His servant.* The generous Levite needed no more and, undaunted by the shower of stones that rattled around him like hail, made the sacrifice of his life, crying out with a loud voice, *Lord Jesus, receive my soul.* Many saintly women have followed this example of our Saviour, and by pointing to Heaven, have encouraged their sons to an illustrious martyrdom. Thus the mother of St Clement of Ancyra; the mother of the Maccabees; the mother of St Symphorian, beholding their own sons in the hands of the executioners, said nothing to inspire them with invincible firmness under the cruelty of these barbarous men except bidding them raise their eyes to Heaven, and give a single glance at the joy and glory which were to reward their constancy. Full well did these heroines know that nothing avails so much as the hope of everlasting bliss to render a soul superior to torment and to death.

109. An illustrious hero shall now, by his own example, supply a demonstration of this truth. The holy martyr Celsus was, by his hope, made proof against the assaults of his father's tenderness and subsequent cruelty.† The Governor Marcian, after having inflicted the most terrible torments on the martyr St Julian, ordered him to be dragged through the streets amid the insults of the mob. Now, while this generous Confessor of the faith was thus led through the public places, showing by the calm of his countenance the intrepidity of his soul, he chanced to pass by the house where Celsus, the cruel Governor's only son, was at school. The shouts of the mob that crowded round the holy martyr drew Celsus and his schoolfellows to the window, to catch a glimpse of what was causing such commotion. But, at that moment, God presented to his view another most impressive sight, It was given to the boy to see pendant in the sky the crown of glory which was in store for the unconquerable martyr. This diadem was of the

* Ecce video cœlos apertos, et Jesum stantem a dextris Dei Act. vij. 56.
† Surius, In Vitâ, 9 Januar.

purest gold, and it shed so bright a lustre, inlaid as it was with the most priceless gems, that the light of the sun paled before it. Celsus saw, moreover, Angels of ravishing aspect standing by the martyr in his conflict, and encouraging him to win that bright crown. Astounded at this vision, the favoured boy began to exclaim, with a voice interrupted by sobs, "What do I see! Great God, I see that He alone can reward them that serve Him. I too, will be His servant, and win for myself a like crown of glory." And so, fired with a lively hope of never-ending rewards, the greatness whereof he had been given to understand by the vision of that resplendent diadem, he cast aside the profane books he had been studying, tore up his papers, and even took off the costly garb in which he was clothed, saying, "*Naked I came into the world, and naked will I leave it.* The world may take what belongs to it, but God shall have what is my own,—my heart, my liberty, and life." Then, in a transport of fervent Hope, he ran after the holy martyr through the public streets, and neither his master and schoolfellows, nor the crowd, which so extraordinary an occurrence had filled with amazement, could deter him from his purpose. At length he overtook Julian, fell at his feet, and exclaimed, "I renounce, servant of the true God,—I renounce the father who begat me to the darkness of unbelief, I take thee for my father, that thou mayest engender me anew to the light of the true faith." Then clasping the future martyr in his arms, and tenderly kissing the wounds he had received for the sake of his God, he began to gather up the drops of blood that flowed from them as if they were (and in the Lord's sight they really were) so many priceless gems. Meanwhile intelligence having reached the ears of Marcian concerning this sudden change in his son, he fell into a paroxysm of rage and indignation. He ordered both Julian and his own son to be brought before him. "Thou treacherous Julian," said he to the former, "thou hast then succeeded in robbing me of my dear only son, the hope of my race, the pride of my heart." While he was thus speaking, the mother of Celsus appeared upon the scene, her hair all dishevelled, and in a flood of tears, followed by her household, all of whom were overwhelmed with grief. At this mournful sight Marcian rent his

garments, and, turning to Julian, exclaimed, "Cruel, heartless wretch! art thou not moved by a father's sorrow, a mother's tears, and the mourning of an entire family, beguiled by thy witcheries. For heaven's sake, afford some relief to our sorrows, and I will make up to thee for thy suffering. No longer will I be thy judge, but rather will I plead thy cause with Cæsar, who is incensed against thee." Julian replied, "I need no intercessor, nor do I set store by my life. Behold him who was born of thee, and who now, as a believer, is born again to a new life. Let him speak to his father and mother." Then Celsus addressed them with a constancy and courage which the hope of everlasting rewards, revealed to him under the emblem of that shining crown, had inspired him with. "Roses," he said, "blossom on prickly briars, and yet they shed a delicious fragrance. Smite me, then, you that make yourselves as thorns, tear me, slay me, that, as a fragrant rose, I may shed a savoury perfume. No longer do I acknowledge you for my parents, for I have been begotten anew to a better life. The tears that stream from your eyes are unavailing, they shall not have force to soften my heart. It is not meet that, by compassionating you, I should be cruel to myself. Take, then, the life you have given to me. I shall be more grateful to you for its loss than ever I have been for its bestowal." Sustained by this fortitude, the generous boy flinched not from the gloomiest dungeons, allowed his scalp to be torn off, met the wild beasts in the arena without quailing before the fearful monsters, and ended by bravely baring his neck to the sword of the executioner.

110. Now if the hope of heavenly glory, seen under the figure of resplendent crown, could thus make a boy proof against a mother's tears and a father's grief, rendering him so brave under fearful tortures, and intrepid in the face of a cruel death, how much more should that same blessed hope, which is ever held up by faith before our eyes, be powerful to impart to us patient durance amid the sufferings and ailments that afflict our bodies; under the mishaps and disasters that befall our families; under the slanders, reproach, and persecutions wherewith our enemies assail us, to sully our fair fame; in a word, amid the countless ills flesh is heir to here below! For these sufferings of ours are

not to be compared to the inflictions, the torments, the painful death, so bravely confronted by the martyrs for the hope they had of never-ending bliss. Hope, says St Gregory, lifts man above himself, makes him callous to the evils he has to undergo; or, if he feels them, it strengthens him to bear them.* Hence, as Holy Church has it in one of her Collects, our thoughts and hearts should ever be fixed by hope where there are real, not apparent, joys; where happiness is genuine, not counterfeit; and everlasting, not fleeting and momentary: if we desire to be patient amid the ills that surround us on all sides.†

CHAPTER VII.

THE OCCASIONS WHICH SPECIALLY CALL FOR THE PRACTICE OF HOPE.

111. In the first place, Hope, or rather Confidence—which implies a firm and steadfast hope, according to what we read in Seneca's letter to his friend Lucilius, "I have good hopes of you, but as yet do not feel confident concerning you,"‡—Confidence or Trust is always required in prayer, when we put up our petitions to God, and beseech Him for some gift; for upon this mainly depends the efficacy of our supplications to obtain the graces expedient for us. Of this there can be no question, both because the Gospel so frequently inculcates it, as we have heretofore seen, and because St James is so unmistakably clear on this point: *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God. . . . But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea. . . . For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.*§

* Spes in æternitatem animum erigit; et idcirco nulla mala exterius, quæ tolerat, sentit. Moral., lib. vj., cap. 13.

† Ibi nostra fixa sint corda, ubi vera sunt gaudia.

‡ De te spem habeo, nondum fiduciam. Epist. vj.

§ Si quis indiget sapientiâ, postulet a Deo . . . postulet autem in fide,

112. We find a notable example of this trust in prayer in the poor blind man who, when our Saviour was about to enter the gates of Jericho, began to cry aloud, *Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.** And though the crowd told him to hold his peace, and not to deafen them with his clamouring, being stimulated by the hope of recovering his eyesight, he broke out into louder cries,† nor ceased until his vision was perfectly restored to him. No doubt, this mercy was the fruit of the trust wherewith he asked for it, since we have Christ's own words to that effect: *Thy faith hath made thee whole.*‡ The spiritual man will therefore resolve never to ask any favour of God, without first stirring up within his breast a lively hope in God, by calling to mind the manifold promises given to us that our prayers shall be heard, or else the sovereign goodness of God, ever more eager to grant favours than we are to receive them. If either the devil or our own natural pusillanimity seek to impose silence on us by suggesting that our prayers are of no avail to touch God's heart, we may learn from the blind man of the Gospel to lift up our voice, to enliven our faith, and to renew our demands with greater earnestness. Unless a man do this, he may pray much, but he will obtain little or nothing.

113. We must, secondly, stir up our hope when despair and distrust taunt us with the memory of our past sins, or with the sight of our actual shortcomings, or even with the experience of our own weakness and frailty, and of the little progress we are making in the way of the Lord. When pilots find themselves in danger of shipwreck, they cast anchor, and trust to it their tempest-beaten bark. Our anchor, as the Apostle quoted above tells us, is hope.§ Hence, when the soul begins to be disturbed by the upheaving of distrust, or to feel the shock of the impetuous billows of diabolical despair, it must forthwith betake itself to the anchor of hope, which must be cast into the boundless ocean of Divine

nihil hæsitans: qui enim hæsitat, similis est fluctui maris, qui a vento movetur et circumfertur. Non ergo existimet homo ille, quod accipiat aliquid a Domino Jac. i. 5.

* Jesu, fili David, miserere mei. Luc. xviij. 38.

† Ipse vero multo magis clamabat.

‡ Fides tua te salvum fecit.

§ Propositam spem, quam sicut anchoram habemus animæ tutam, et firmam

goodness, and into the unlimited expanse of God's mercy. To this goodness and mercy it must hold fast. At such times, we should ever repeat with all earnestness of heart, "*In Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust, let me never be confounded.** Even though I beheld myself on the brink of hell, about to fall into it, yet would I hope in Thee."† We should continue to renew these acts of hope until calm and serenity be restored to our mind and heart.

114. The best remedy for these fits of dejection is to renew our hope in the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of Mercy, the Blessed Virgin Mary; for with her heavenly light she invariably scatters the darkness of melancholy and calms the troubled spirit. Pilots, while steering their course, keep their eye always fixed upon the polar star, and under the guidance of its beams they make sure amid the rolling waves of their way to the haven of their desire. "Thus," says St Bernard, "when the storms of doubt or despair begin to rage in your mind, lift up your eyes to Mary, our guiding star in the tempestuous sea on which we are borne; implore her help, and the gentle light of her countenance will calm these storms. If, troubled by the enormity of your sins, or covered with shame at the defilemen s of conscience, or appalled by the severity of the divine judgment, you feel that you are sinking into the abyss of sadness, the slough of despond, lift up your mind to Mary. In affliction of soul, in doubt, and perplexity of mind, think on Mary; have recourse to Mary in all hope. Let her name never be absent from your mouth, or from your heart;‡ for if you pray to her with a lively faith, you shall never fall into despair; if you lift up your mind to her, you shall not go astray amid the turmoil of your anxious and careworn heart." What a powerful remedy against disheartening suggestions of the devil is a trustful recourse to Mary!§

115. Another no less effectual means prescribed by the same

* In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum.

† Etiamsi occideris me, in te sperabo.

‡ Si criminum immanitate turbatus, conscientiæ sævitate confusus, judicii horrore perterritus, barathro incipias absorberi tristitiæ, desperationis abysso, cogita Mariam. In periculis, in angustiis, in dubiis, Mariam cogita, Mariam invoca; non recedat ab ore, non recedat a corde. Hom. 2, super Missus.

§ Ipsam rogans non desperas, ipsam cogitans non erras.

holy Doctor for bringing back hope to the heart that, in the tempest of these pusillanimous and diffident feelings, has drifted from its moorings, is to call to mind the wounds suffered by our most loving Saviour in His own Body in order to heal the gaping wounds of our soul—the priceless Blood shed to cleanse our conscience from all defilement of sin. "I have fallen into a grievous sin," says the Saint, "my conscience is alarmed, yet shall it not be troubled; for I will call to mind the wounds of my Lord, Who was bruised for our iniquities. What sin can be so deadly as not to be healed by the death of Christ?" He then continues: "If you but recall to memory so mighty and effectual a remedy, you will never be cast down or disheartened at the heinousness and malice of your faults. He, therefore, plainly was in the wrong who wickedly murdered his brother, and then said, *My sin is greater than may be forgiven.*"*

116. God one day told St Catharine of Sienna that the sinners who despair of His mercy, by losing hope at the end of their lives, do Him more injury by this one sin than by all the others they have committed in the course of their lives; thus showing by this new crime that they esteem their sins to be greater than His infinite mercy, and hence inflicting a grievous insult on this divine attribute.† Let him, then, who is agitated by such disquieting feelings, say to the Lord, "I have committed grievous faults, but to mistrust, still more to despair of, Thy sovereign goodness is what I will never do; for this would be the greatest outrage of all. No, Lord, I will never be guilty of this sin, whatever else I may do."

117. We must, in the third place, take to ourselves the stout buckler of hope whenever the devil molests us with his temptations, be they of impurity, of hatred, of love, of envy, of anger, or revenge; and by its means ward off every deadly blow aimed at

* Peccavi peccatum grande: turbatur conscientia, sed non perturbabitur, quoniam vulnerum Domini recordabor; nempe vulneratus est propter iniquitates nostras. Quid tam ad mortem, quod non Christi morte salvetur? Si enim ad mentem venerit tam potens, tam efficax medicamentum, nullâ jam possum morbi malignitate terreri: et ideo liquet errasse illum qui ait: *Major est iniquitas mea, quam ut veniam merear.* Serm. 61, in Cant.

† Blosius, Monit. Spir., cap. 1.

us. This is the advice given by the Prince of the Apostles, who warns us that *the devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking to devour* unwary souls.* And St Peter also arms us with weapons capable of striking down this monster greedy of making havoc of baptized souls. But what is this potent weapon? It is hope: *Whom resist ye*, says St Peter, *strong in faith*,† in trust in God; for just as he seeks to dishearten us by the diffidence always mingled with his evil suggestions, even so do we destroy his confidence by our hope: and as the wicked one ever strives to cast us down by discouragement, so should we endeavour to prostrate him by a firm hope in the divine help.

118. Hence the person tempted must look up to God with the steady gaze of faith, and behold God at his side, ready to assist him, as was the custom of holy David in the like case, who sings, *The Lord is ever at my right hand*, sustaining me with His Almighty arm, *lest I be moved*.‡ Let him then, by hope, cast himself into the arms of his Divine Protector, saying, "My God, in Thee do I hope, in Thee do I put my trust amid the assaults of my diabolical foe." And by this behaviour he may be certain that he will not be the loser. Let him hearken to the assurance given us by St John Chrysostom: "You have God with you, Who will lighten the weight of your temptations, Who will not suffer them to overtask your strength, nor to bear you down with their pressure, but Who, in exposing you to these conflicts, vouchsafes the grace whereby to come forth from them with a glorious victory. Wherefore then be dejected and sorrowful? Why tremble and fear?"§ We must then trust in God, and say with great courage, "If God be with us, if He fight for us, who can harm us or do us any injury?"‖

* Adversarius vester diabolus, tamquam leo rugiens, circuit, quærens quem devoret.

† Cui resistite fortes in fide. Petr. iij. 8.

‡ Quoniam a dextris est mihi ne commovear.

§ Habes eum, qui gravia alleviet, qui non permittet te submergi ab illatis tentationibus; qui cum tentatione et exitum præbet, et non permittet supra vires inferri gravia. Quid tristaris? quid mœres? quare tam abjecto animo es? Hom. 32, in Gen.

‖ Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?

119. Palladius relates * that Abbot Pachomius was assailed with many grievous and continual temptations, so that he had not a moment's truce by day or by night. Unable to bear up any longer against such violent and repeated assaults, he yielded to despair and determined to make away with himself. He therefore left his cell, and in a state of great agitation went to a cavern in which he knew a lioness was lurking. He stripped himself naked, and waited all day long for the beast to come forth, feeling certain that as soon as she caught sight of him, she would tear him to pieces without more ado. At eventide, towards dusk, the lion and his mate came forth, and as these brutes have a relish for human flesh, they no sooner were on his scent than they made for him at once. But scarce had they come up to him, than they crouched at his feet and began to lick him gently, as if they had been two harmless puppies. On beholding so manifest a prodigy, the Abbot stood amazed and, seeing that he was not forsaken of God (as he had foolishly imagined), since such extraordinary assistance was vouchsafed to him, he conceived a lively hope of the divine help; put on his clothes, and returned quite cheered to his cell. But the devil was not going to relinquish the fight, as the Abbot had fancied; he had only withdrawn; it was a truce, not peace, that had been made. For, after a few days Satan returned to the assault with an impure temptation of the most dangerous description; for he appeared to the Abbot in the shape of an Ethiopian girl, whom he had once seen gleaning in the fields. The afflicted monk then fell into a deeper despondency, and into such grievous sadness, that it was killing him by inches. While thus sorely troubled, he heard a voice from Heaven saying to him: "I have allowed this trial to befall you, that, knowing your own weakness, you may wholly mistrust yourself, and in all humility place your whole reliance in Me alone." † At these words, the Abbot discovered that the root of his evil was his great reliance on self, and his want of confidence in God in time of temptation. He began to

* Hist. Laus., Vita 29.

† Ut cognoscas infirmitatem tuam, et non in conversatione tuâ confidas; sed subditus et humilis sis, in adjutorio Dei confidens.

have recourse to the Almighty with a steadfast hope of His aid, and thus worsted the tempter, and spent the remainder of his days in peace. The true shield wherewith to ward off the fiery darts of temptation is a lively trust in God, combined with diffidence in self: this is the weapon St Paul would ever have us use to repel the assaults of so formidable a foe.*

120. Fourthly, hope is to be practised in time of tribulation; whether it affects the body, as suffering, sickness, poverty—or whether it wounds the heart, as affronts, persecutions, slander, the loss of goods, relatives, or whatever is most dear to us. I will be brief on this point, having already shown in the foregoing Chapter how hope makes us strong, and nerves us against the severest strokes of human calamity. Hence, he who is in affliction must have recourse to this virtue, and set it as a guard over his heart, if so be that he desire to pass scatheless through the serried band of evils that assail him on every side. I will only add this saying of St Ambrose: "Granting that some may be found who bravely endure fatigue, and show courage in bearing with insults, their patience will be short-lived if you deprive them of the virtue of hope."† The reason of this, according to St Gregory the Great, is that the expectation of never-ending rewards strengthens our mind not to yield to the pressure of earthly woes.‡ If this fail us, man, with his weak nature, must give way under the shock of human vicissitudes. Hence, to have enduring patience there is need of a very constant hope to sweeten the soul's bitterness and maintain it in conformity with the divine will. In this sense the Apostle observes: *Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which has great recompense. For you have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, you may receive the promise.*§

* **Induite vos armaturam** Dei, ut possitis stare adversus insidias diaboli.

† **Esto sint aliqui duri** ad labores, firmi ad injurias perferendas; si spem auferas, non potest patientia esse perpetua. Serm. 15, in Psal. cxviij.

‡ **Spes** cœlestium mentem consolidat, ne concutiatur fluctibus tumultuum terrenorum. Hom. 17.

§ **Nolite amittere** confidentiam vestram, quæ magnam habet remunerationem. Patientia enim necessaria est, ut voluntatem Dei facientes, reportetis repromissionem. **Ad Hebr. x. 35, 36.**

121. It is recorded in the Chronicles of the Friars Minor, that St Francis of Assisi having suffered for fifty days a most acute pain in the eyes, and after having been so plagued with mice that he could not get an hour's sleep, besought God to grant him patience in this trial. While he was in prayer, he heard a voice saying: "Tell me, Francis, if all the earth were gold, and the rocks precious stones, if the rivers ran with the choicest balsam, and then if you were to find so precious a treasure, that in comparison of it the gold were as vile as dust, the jewels of less price than common pebbles, and the balsam less valuable than the water that you use; and if this rich store were given to you as a reward for your present illness, say, Francis, would you not account these sufferings precious, would you not rejoice at them?" The Saint replied: "I do not deserve such a treasure." The Lord then continued: "This priceless treasure is life everlasting, which I have prepared for you, the pledge of which I give you in this infirmity." At these words the Saint was greatly rejoiced, and encouraged to suffer. So, whenever he found himself obliged to endure hunger, cold, nakedness, sickness, and other afflictions, he used to say, "Such is the happiness I look for, that every pain is delicious to me." So true it is that to bear patiently the ills of our present life we must have a lively hope of the bliss of the next world.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE.

122. FIRST suggestion. The Director must take care not to allow his penitents to grow slack in hope; for, if they grow weak in this virtue, their weakness will soon extend to every other virtue. I have given the reason elsewhere. Hope works on the soul an effect like that of the vital spirits on our bodily frame, which render it ready and agile in its operations. If the

vital spirits are diminished in the body, its activity is lessened in the same degree. Were our body to be wholly deprived of them, it would become a motionless trunk, incapable of any action. Thus, in precisely the same way, if a Christian lose hope altogether, he becomes wholly powerless for good; if this virtue be not quite extinct in him, but only diminished, his vigour and energy for God's work are lessened in the very same proportion. In a word, a Christian altogether wanting in hope cannot be a good Christian, and a Christian who is weak and imperfect in hope cannot be a perfect Christian.

123. Now, the Director will meet, even among those who make profession of spirituality and devotion, numbers who are not grounded in this most important virtue, for they easily give way to diffidence, discouragement, and faint-heartedness. Whence it follows that, growing lukewarm in hope, the love of God waxes cold; they become slack in the practice of virtue, and slothful, heavy, and lazy in well-doing. But this is especially to be borne in mind, that they feel no scruple about these pusillanimous and cowardly thoughts; mistaking for humility what truly is baseness, and esteeming that to be a virtue which is a hateful sin. The greatest danger of their temptation is that they do not consider it to be a temptation. In northern latitudes, where there is perpetual snow, the bears make great havoc; for, being white, on account of the snow they have ever before their eyes, they are less observed. Thus these faults, which conceal their hideous mien and assume the disguise of some virtue, do most harm; for not being accounted as faults, they are less shunned. When the Director meets with persons of this class,—as will not unfrequently be the case,—he must enlarge their hearts, and, by putting before them motives of hope, must raise them from the dejection in which they are lying; for, while thus prostrate, they cannot move a step in the path of perfection.

124. Second suggestion. But here we must begin at the very beginning, and explain, when seeking out their origin, wherein consist the evil affections of distrust and despair, vices opposed to the virtue of hope; for, by being acquainted with the nature and sources of these evils, the spiritual physician will easily apply

to them suitable remedies. St Thomas says, that despair is not precisely the absence of hope, but a positive flinching of the will from the object desired, on account of the apprehension that it is impossible to attain its possession.* The same holy Doctor further teaches, that this shrinking and turning back from the object of desire—in which the malice of despair mainly consists—springs from an exaggerated fear of God and horror of sin, in the person who despairs.†

125. Diffidence, which falls short of this extreme malice, we can define to be a want of hope, or a languishing, cold, and wavering hope, which in its turn springs from an indiscreet fear of God, and an equally indiscreet horror of sin. This is the difference between one who despairs and another who mistrusts God; the former by his will turns wholly away from God, as from an end impossible of attainment; while the latter forsakes not God wholly by his will, and, nevertheless, does not cleave to Him by hope, or, at least, is bound only by the frail thread of a very feeble hope. In speaking of despair, St Thomas hesitates not to say that it is the most damning sin of all sins, unbelief itself not excepted, nor even open hate of God;‡ for, as the soul no longer expects any good from God, it casts aside every virtuous practice, and runs headlong down the steep of vice and perdition. In confirmation of this view, he alleges the saying of St Isidore of Seville, "that to commit a crime is to give death to the soul, but to despair is to rush headlong into hell."§ True, the like does not hold good of diffidence, yet this too is harmful, since it has the same origin as despair; that is, it springs from a misdirected fear of God and abhorrence of sin: though the perversion thereof be less, and although it does not wholly withdraw

* Desperatio non importat solam privationem spei; sed importat quemdam recessum a re desideratâ propter existimatam impossibilitatem adipiscendi. 1, 2, quæst. 40, art. 4, ad 3.

† Ex timore Dei, vel ex horrore peccatorum contingit desperatio, in quantum his bonis aliquis male utitur, occasionem ab eis accipiens desperandi. 1, 2, quæst. 20, art. 1, ad 2.

‡ 2, 2, quæst. 22, art. 3, in corp.

§ Perpetrare flagitium aliquod, mors est animæ; sed desperare, est descendere in infernum. Lib. ij., cap. 14.

from God, still it draws not nigh unto Him, or, at least, only slightly by means of hope, so that it occasions slackness in well-doing, and a certain predisposition to evil. The Director may perceive that I was right in saying that no progress is to be looked for from a spiritual person until he be freed from this dejection of spirit. Let us come to the practical part of this teaching.

126. If, then, the abuse of fear gives birth not only to despair, but also to diffidence and to discouragement, the Director must look to it that fear be always tempered by hope in the hearts of his penitents. Fear is necessary, for without it a soul, as I said in the preceding Chapters, is like a ship with sails full set, but devoid of ballast, and the more it is free from weight, the more it runs a risk of being stranded and lost. Hope, likewise, is needed, since without it the soul is like a bark in a dead calm, floating like a log on the waters, unable to continue its voyage. But a soul that both hopes and fears is a ship which reaches port in safety, steadied by ballast and propelled by a favourable wind. The Director must take care that hope be ever greater than fear, that it surpass it and master it, as St Paul teaches; for this it is which is the motive power of all our good deeds, and the very soul of all virtue.* If fear be ever blended with hope, there will be no danger of diffidence, still less of any feeling of despair; for fear will be both humble and bold, because sustained by hope; and hope will be steadfast and modest, because kept down by fear. When, therefore, the Director meets with diffident souls, he will lead them to a frequent consideration of the motives suited to raise their hope; he will order them to nourish themselves in prayer with this virtue without stint, for their weak state has need of such strong food. But he will especially insist, that when they feel dejected by the fear of punishment or the horror of their own personal sins, they repeat acts of hope until they feel their languishing soul refreshed and reinvigorated.

127. Third suggestion. But since this undue horror of sin, and the exaggerated fear whence diffidence and at times despair take their rise, may proceed from various sources—that is, from the dread arising from present or bygone guilt, from the instability of

* Ut abundetis in spe, et virtute Spiritûs Sancti. Rom xv. 23.

the will, which is ever relapsing into the same faults, or from the forecasting of future evils that threaten us, it is necessary that, in every one of these cases, the Director should have at hand the remedy for restoring courage to the person who is smitten with excessive fear.

128. If this diffidence be caused by the horror of bygone sins, he will tell the penitent, with St Basil, that our sins though heinous and manifold are yet limited in number and malice; while the mercy of God, both in itself and by the number of its acts, is boundless and immeasurable. Hence we can have no reason for not trusting in it, and we must detest our sins, while fixing the gaze of hope on the infinite greatness of God's goodness.* With St John Chrysostom may he likewise suggest, that all our sins, though of themselves most grievous, are, when set side by side with God's mercy, but a cobweb which is blown away by a single puff of wind.† And if the Confessor were to go further and say, that were the whole piled-up heap of our enormities to be cast into the boundless ocean of God's mercy, it would be but as a drop of gall in a sea of milk, he would in no wise exaggerate, but fall short of the truth.

129. If the penitent's fear for the past be about the Confessions he has made, as if they were not well made, the Director will examine the grounds of this anxiety. If he find none, he will tell him to be sorry for his past sins; and if he has sinned a thousand times, to detest them a thousand times and be at peace, since being no longer obliged to confess them (for we suppose he has already duly confessed), he may always insure the pardon of such faults by frequent acts of contrition, even if, for some unknown reason, they had failed to be blotted out. This is the advice of St John Chrysostom: "Do not excuse your want of trust by saying, I am a blasphemer, a persecutor of Christ, a debauchee, for in both the Old and New Testament, God has

* Si peccata magnitudine et numero possunt definiri; misericordia autem Dei et miserationes ejus, neque magnitudine neque numero possunt circumscribi: sine dubio non est cur desperatio adhibenda sit: sed cognoscenda misericordia Dei, et commissa peccata detestanda. Regul. Brev., quæst. 13.

† Quid est peccatum ad Dei misericordiam? tela araneæ, quæ vento flante, nusquam comparet. Hom. 2, in Psal. l.

forgiven the like excesses: in the Old Testament, David, the adulterer; in the New, Paul, once a persecutor of the Church. Away with such excuses. If you have sinned, repent. If your sins be counted by thousands, let your repentance equal them." *

130. Should this want of trust take its rise from present falls, and the inconstancy experienced in keeping to our resolutions, (as may not unfrequently be the case with spiritual persons, who despair of making progress from their having frequently fallen into faults which they would gladly avoid, and from feeling the violence of their passions), the Director will encourage them to place their reliance on the divine help, from the motive that a full victory over self is a work of grace, a gift of God which He never withholds from such as ask it in hope. He may also encourage such penitents by the example of St Peter, who, as St Bernard observes, after having been chosen among thousands to the Apostleship, and having been raised above his fellows, shamefully fell at the end, and that, too, after repeated promises of constancy, yet attained afterwards a high degree of holiness. "If," says the holy Doctor, "St Peter, after so woful a fall, scaled the loftiest heights of sanctity, who can despair of perfection if only he be in earnest about rising from his faults?" †

131. Should the penitent's failing trust take its rise in the dread of the punishments of the next life, the Director will cheer him by the consideration of what the Son of God underwent in order to rescue us from everlasting woes, and to bring us to happiness that knows no end. This is the remedy prescribed by St Paul: *Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* ‡ A Director does

* Nolo dicas, blasphemus sum. Nolo dicas, persecutor sum, immundus sum. Habes omnium ostensiones, in quem volueris portum confugito. Vis in novo? vis in veteri? In veteri David, in novo Paulus. Nolo excusationes mihi afferas, nolo mihi ignaviam tuam prætendas. Peccasti? pœnitere. Millies peccasti? millies pœnitere. Ut supra.

† Si Petrus post tam gravem lapsum ad tantam rediit eminentiam sanctitatis, quis de cætero desperet, si tamen egredi voluerit a peccato? Serm. 3, in Solemnit. Petri et Pauli.

‡ Recogitate eum, qui talem sustinuit a peccatoribus contradictionem, ut ne fatigemini animis vestris deficientes. Hebr. xij. 3.

well to remind such a person of those words of St John: *God has so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but have life everlasting.** And should these express promises fail to console a heart cast down by excessive fears, he may suggest those words of Christ, wherein He declares, that He came into this world mainly to save sinners;† and those others, in which He protests, that He leaves the ninety-nine sheep to go and seek one that has gone astray, and bring it back to the fold, and, having recovered it, holds high festival in Paradise, which He does not for the safe keeping of the rest; so much does God yearn for the salvation of sinners. The Confessor will then tell him, while making these considerations, to keep repeating those words of Job we have so frequently quoted, as they are so well suited to raise the Hope of a fainting soul. They are—"My Jesus, the pledges Thou hast given me of eternal salvation are such, that even wert Thou about to pierce me with the sword of Thy divine Justice, yet would I put my trust in Thee. Thou art my Redeemer, my Saviour; whom shall I fear, of whom shall I be sore afraid?"‡

132. A Priest, while on a visit to St Lidwina, broke out into these words: "I would be content if I were sure to go to Purgatory, and to abide there as many years as there are grains of mustard in this vessel before us." "How now," replied the Saint, "why trust so little in the divine goodness? If you knew how fearful are the sufferings of another world, you would surely not speak as you do." Some few days after the Priest died, and it was revealed to the Saint that he was saved, but severely punished in Purgatory for the little hope which, during his lifetime, he had placed in God's mercy.§ Let him, then, that would go to Paradise, hope; and if he would go there soon, let him hope much. But take notice that this hope does not dispense us from striving and co-operating with grace; for to expect salvation, without good

* Sic Deus dilexit mundum, ut Filium suum unigenitum daret, ut omnis qui credit in ipsum, non pereat, sed habeat vitam æternam. Joan. iij. 16.

† Non veni vocare justos, sed peccatores. Matth. ix. 13.

‡ Etiamsi occideris me, in te sperabo; ipse eris salvator meus.

§ Surius. In Vitâ, 14 Aprilis.

works, is not hope, but rashness and presumption. We must hope for a glorious beatitude, for the uprooting of our vices and the acquisition of virtue, by means of our own efforts, which, however, presuppose the help of God's grace, and not our own unaided strength.

ARTICLE III.

On the Love of God.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHAT THE LOVE OF CHARITY FOR GOD CONSISTS, AND IN WHAT IT IS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE LOVE OF CONCUPISCENCE.

133. ALL that has been hitherto said in the three foregoing Treatises may be considered as means and dispositions, either remote or proximate, for the attainment of perfect Charity. This, as the Apostle teaches, is the bond, the very substance of perfection.* St Augustine accounts for it by saying that Charity is the only virtue which unites us to God, the last end for which we were created.† Now that philosopher would be perfect who could point out the real cause of every natural phenomenon, this being the end of all philosophical investigation. So, too, that astronomer would be perfect who should possess a full and certain knowledge of all the movements, influences, and properties of the heavenly bodies, this being the purpose of the science of astronomy. Just so may that Christian claim to be called perfect who has attained the possession of God, his final and blissful end.

* Caritatem habete, quod est vinculum perfectionis. Ad Coloss. iij. 14.

† Caritas est virtus conjungens nos Deo, qui ipsum diligimus. De Morib. Eccl., cap. 11.

This is done by means of charity, which, by uniting the soul with God, puts it in possession of Him ; a possession which in this life is only rudimentary and, to use the school term, inchoate, but which will be full and entire in the world to come. This doctrine, explained by us on a previous occasion, is the plain teaching of St Thomas.

134. But because charity both loves God in Himself, and rejoices in His perfection ; and also loves our neighbour, to whom it wishes well, but only for the good it wishes to God—in other words, loves him for God's sake, as St Augustine observes,*—it follows that this virtue is divided into the Love of God and the Love of our Neighbour. Love of God finds its motive in God's goodness, and its affections terminate in God alone. Love of our neighbour proceeds from the same motive, but its acts terminate in our neighbour. The perfection of the Christian is in the combination of both the one and the other, but it consists, primarily, in the love of God, and, secondarily, in the love of our neighbour. We shall treat of charity towards God in the present and the following Articles ; and in the last Article shall consider charity towards our neighbour.

135. Charity, then, or love of God, is an infused theological virtue, which raises our will to love God, above all else, for His own sake, and because He is infinitely deserving of our love. Let us dwell a little upon these words, which contain within them the very essence of divine charity. It is beyond question that charity is a theological virtue, since the sole object of its loving yearnings is God Himself. God alone is the motive, God alone is the object of its affections. Still less may we deny it to be an infused virtue, since St Paul assures us of the fact. *The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is* (personally) *given to us*,† every time sanctifying grace, which is inseparable from charity—if indeed, as many divines are of opinion, it be not charity itself—is bestowed upon us. It is equally unde-

* Caritatem voco motum animi ad fruendum Deo propter ipsum, et se, et proximo propter Deum. De Doctr. Christ., lib. iij., cap. 10.

† Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum, qui datus est nobis. Ad Rom. v. 5.

niable that this virtue raises our will to acts transcending its natural powers. Because if, for every supernatural act, our powers must be raised above themselves by God's grace, and must be set on a level with an action passing their natural capacity, how much more necessary will not such elevation be in order to put forth an act of perfect charity, since thereby the soul is united to God, made to partake of His divine perfections, and, by participation, to become like God Himself. And, in saying this, I have not gone too far, for it belongs to love to change the lover into the object of his love, so that he becomes in affection what the latter is in very deed, according to St Augustine's well-known saying, "If we love the earth, we are of the earth; if we love God, I will boldly say we become like to God Himself."

136. I said that this uplifting of the will must reach to the love of God, above all things that can possibly be put in comparison with Him; for it is proper to charity to give God the first place in all the affections of which the heart of man is capable, and to care for His interests more than for any other good. Charity makes no account of all created goods in comparison with the good it discovers in God.* And herein it shows the perfect uprightness of its affections; for it would be no less absurd to set the earth above heaven, and mud above the stars, than to fall into the disorder of preferring any created good to the sovereign, uncreated good, which is God.

137. Finally, charity loves God alone, simply for His own sake, and because He is infinitely worthy of all love. In this it is distinguished from the love of concupiscence. To understand this difference, we must bear in mind that God is good in Himself, and good to us. In Himself, He is supremely good, since He embraces within Himself every perfection and all good. In Him is almighty power, the highest wisdom, boundless goodness, peerless beauty, a providence, an immensity, a majesty, a grandeur, passing all our knowledge, our every idea. And the reason, as given by the Prophet Isaias, is that no created thing can be compared to God, nor can any

* Si dederit homo omnem substantiam domûs suæ pro dilectione, quasi nihil despiciet eam. Cant. vj. 7.

image shadow forth His greatness.* Neither can our minds form any conception of Him which is at all adequate. To this does the Psalmist allude, when he exclaims, in a transport of admiration and amazement, *Who is like unto Thee, O Lord?*† But, if there be no created thing which can be taken as a due representation of the boundless perfections of the uncreated Being; neither can any created mind comprehend the sovereign loveliness that entitles Him to the most ardent love. Further, this God, so good in Himself, is also sovereignly good to us, being infinitely inclined to do us good, as well by rescuing us from never-ending woes and making us partakers of His infinite good and His own happiness, as by affording us whatever help is necessary or expedient to enable us to attain to so great a bliss.

138. This principle being established, if we love God because He is good to us, our love is called a love of concupiscence; of a holy concupiscence, because we love God with a view to our owr interest: and it is from this that theological hope, of which we discoursed in the preceding Article, takes its rise. But if God be loved, not for the sake of any advantage which we may hope to get from Him for ourselves, but only because He is good in Himself and infinitely deserving of love, He is then loved with a love of Charity or Benevolence, being loved on account of His own deserts. We may explain this by a tale that is to be read in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert, concerning two monks who were brothers, one of whom was young, and the other old. Having forsaken the world, they withdrew into a wild and solitary place, where they wholly devoted themselves to God's service. After many years thus spent, the devil, envying the holiness of the younger monk, devised a most cruel stratagem against him, in order to cast him into the pit of despair. He disguised himself as an angel of light, and under this false exterior appeared to the elder, telling him that he was sent by God as bearer of a most melancholy message, to the effect that his brother was of the number of the reprobate, and that his austerities, prayers, and

* Cui similem fecistis Deum, vel quam imaginem ponetis ei? Isai. xl. 18.

† Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster! Quis similis tibi? Ps. cxij. 5; Ps. lxx. 19.

other devout exercises, in which he was daily employed, would not receive any recompense from God in the next life. The simple monk gave implicit credence to this lie of the traitor-angel, whose melancholy communication plunged him into gloom and affliction. But, worse than this, he was unable to dissemble his grief, so whenever he met his brother he betrayed it by his sorrowful countenance, and by the tears which he was unable to restrain. The brother repeatedly begged him to discover the cause of his deep melancholy, and frequently besought him to say why his countenance became overcast whenever they conversed together, promising amendment if he had given occasion to this grief by any fault of his own. Unable to resist this request, the good old man could no longer hide the cause of his sorrow. "I weep and mourn," he said, "for too just a reason. God has revealed to me that you are to be damned," and with these words he burst into a flood of tears. The youth, without manifesting any emotion, said, "Be not troubled, dear brother; I am quite content that God's will be done. If He wills me to go to hell, let Him do what seems good to Him. This notwithstanding, I will serve Him as fervently and earnestly as heretofore, for I love and serve God neither for hope of reward nor for fear of punishment, but solely because His boundless goodness deserves it. This alone suffices for me to persevere in the same tenor of life." So pleasing to God was this act, that the following night He sent an Angel to inform the deluded monk that the spirit who had first appeared to him was a false fiend, who came not from heaven, but from the bottomless pit, with a view to delude him and to ruin his brother by a lying and injurious revelation. The monk was assured that his brother was numbered with the elect, and that by his act of heroic charity he had merited more than by all the other good deeds of his past life. The reader may understand from this anecdote in what consists an act of perfect charity, the motive of which is neither the dread of punishment nor the hope of reward, but only the goodness and lovableness of the infinite, immense, and incomprehensible God.

139. But it may be urged that to love God with the love of charity we must divest ourselves of every interested motive, how-

ever spiritual, godly, and meritorious it may be; and hence, that we ought to banish hope from our hearts, the object of which is none other than our supernatural interests. I reply, that this was precisely the error of the Archbishop of Cambrai who, in retracting it, gave such a proof of his piety by the way in which he submitted to the condemnation of his doctrine. Wishing to subtilise beyond due bounds in this matter, he taught the necessity of an habitual state of charity (I say *state*, not *act*), so refined and disinterested that it excluded all hope and fear. But, in good sooth, an habitual state of charity which sets aside, and refuses to admit into the heart, a theological virtue, is not a state of sublime perfection, as he thought, but a state of perdition. The true doctrine is, that perfect charity can, and should be, joined with hope, and that these two noble virtues are in no wise at daggers drawn (to use a popular expression) with each other; that charity, however sublimated and unselfish, does not disdain the fellowship of hope, nor does hope dim the lustre and brightness of the love of God by associating with charity. Whence the Angelic Doctor might well say, that it is one and the self-same good which charity possesses by union with hope, although hope aspires to the good sought for, but as yet from afar.* And why can I not love God for the sake of the infinite perfection which I contemplate in Him, since I certainly am able to love Him, even were no reward in store for my love? and seeing that God is willing to recompense me, may I not long for and desire that reward most earnestly, so that hope may spur me on to more fervent love, which, in its turn, may encourage and raise my hope?

140. The following story of a poor, distressed mother will set this doctrine in a clearer light. She was delivered of an infant, and then, reflecting that in her extreme misery she had no means of bringing up the child, she decided on exposing him at the door of a rich person, with the design and desire that he should be adopted, and thus get needful food and education. Everything came to pass as she had wished; for the lady, being

* Idem bonum est objectum caritatis et spei; sed caritas importat unionem ad illud bonum, spes autem distantiam quamdam ab eo. 1, 2, quæst. 65, art. 4.

charmed by the beauty and loveliness of the helpless babe, received it into her house and adopted it as her own son. Scarce had the mother effected the cruel separation than she felt the yearnings of natural tenderness reproach her with being fiercer even than the tigers, which, cruel as they are to others, fail not in tenderness and love for their own offspring. So, to repair her conduct, she sought underhand, by means of a third person, to be hired as nurse in the household in which her child had been received. And here, too, she obtained her wish; for the husband of the lady took the woman to nurse her own child, and allowed her board and wages for her services. In this instance, the mother loved her child both with an unselfish, maternal affection, and with the interested love of a hired nurse. So earnest was her motherly affection, that, had she made no gain by it, she would have suckled her babe. Her interested feeling, as nurse, was so strong, that, even if the child had not been her own, she would have given him suck for the sake of the support she received in her extreme poverty. So that this twofold efficaciousness, the one wholly unselfish, the other grounded on self-interest, combined wonderfully in this mother's heart. Thus, too, may our will love God unselfishly, by a love of charity solely on account of His deserving infinitely to be loved, even were there no reward for loving Him. But seeing that God is willing to recompense us, we may also love Him for the sake of reward, and hope in Him for this reward, taking occasion from our hope to love God more fervently with a love of charity. Thus may a godly and unselfish love blend in our hearts with an affection both holy and interested, without one being an obstacle to the other; but each intensifying rather, and increasing the other by combining the holy fervour of the two.

CHAPTER II.

CERTAIN QUALITIES OF CHARITY TOWARDS GOD.

141. THE grand prerogative of Charity towards God is the one attributed to it by St Thomas, when he says that it is not merely love for God, but a real friendship with Him.* And the reasons he alleges are most convincing, since the mutual love indispensably required for friendship is to be found in charity; for whoever possesses it loves God, and is beloved of Him, according to our Saviour's word: *He that loves Me, shall be loved of my Father.*† And the beloved disciple bears witness: *He that loves, abides in God, and God in him,* namely, by reciprocal love.‡ Further, nothing is so proper to friendship as a community of goods, according to the adage: *Friends have all in common.* And this is truly verified in charity; for, by means of habitual grace, which is probably one and the same thing with the habit of charity, God takes possession of the souls that love Him, and is to a certain extent possessed by them, even in this life; since they communicate in His Godhead, by becoming *partakers of the divine nature,* as the Prince of the Apostles teaches.§ Moreover, through this same grace and charity they acquire a positive right to the full possession of God in the next world. Whence St Thomas infers that friendship between God and the soul, based upon charity, begins in the present life, to be continued in the next world in happiness that will know no end.‖

142. Nor should the reader look upon this as a novelty; for, long before St Thomas, St Eusebius had taught that the soul by

* Dicendum, quod caritas non solum significat amorem Dei, sed etiam amicitiam quamdam ad ipsum, quæ quidem super amorem addit mutuam redamationem cum quâdam communicatione mutuâ. 1, 2, quæst. 65, art. 5, in corp.

† Qui diligit me, diligetur a Patre meo; et ego diligam eum. Joan. xiv. 21.

‡ Deus caritas est, et qui manet in caritate, in Deo manet, et Deus in eo.

§ II. Petr. i. 4.

‖ Hæc autem societas hominis ad Deum, quæ est quædam familiaris conversatio cum ipso, inchoatur quidem hic in præsenti per gratiam, perficietur autem in futuro per gloriam. Eodem loco.

its conversion to God, by means of charity and true Christian life, which always goes hand in hand with charity, establishes a true and real friendship between God and man.* Hence Christ, beholding His disciples endowed with this beautifying habit of divine charity, told them that He would no longer call them by the lowly name of servants, but would give them the noble title of His friends.† And, in another place, He once more addresses them with the same endearing name.‡

143. But if worldly men make such high account, I do not say of the friendship of princes (for it is impossible for earthly subjects to attain to so high a position in the hearts of their sovereigns), but of their mere favour, protection, and good-will, how should we not esteem charity, which raises us up to the friendship of the King of Heaven, to an intimacy with the King of Kings, the highest honour, indeed, possble of attainment either in heaven above or on earth below? And if Aman so prided himself on the favour he seemed to have gained with King Assuerus as to boast to his friends and to his wife that he was the greatest favourite in the royal palace,§ and that Queen Esther had invited no one but himself to the supper she was to give to the King,‖ how much should we Christians prize that charity which not only makes us friends of the Ruler of the Universe, but likens us to Him, by transfusing into our souls a something, so to speak, of the Godhead, by raising us to the dignity of being partakers in the name and very nature of God, according to the Psalmist: *I have said you are gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High.*¶ And, yet (who could have believed it?) there are persons so besotted, as, for the sake of the love or friendship of some created being, to lose all love for their Creator, and break off that friendship

* Per conversionem ad Deum, et christianam vitam, amicitiam inter Deum et hominem constituit. De Præp. Evang., cap. I.

† Jam non dicam vos servos.... Vos autem dixi amicos. Joan. xv. 15.

‡ Dico autem vobis amicis meis. Luc. xij. 4.

§ Exposuit illis.... quantâ cum gloriâ super omnes principes, et servos suos rex elevâsset.

‖ Et post hoc ait: Regina quoque Esther nullum alium vocavit ad convivium cum rege, præter me. Esther v. 11.

¶ Ego dixi: Dii estis, et filii Excelsi omnes. Psal. lxxxj. 6.

with Him which is the highest privilege the heavenly Seraphim may boast. Wretches! by their love of earth, they become earthly, and degrade themselves to the level of those objects to which their grovelling affections attract them.

144. Another prerogative which imparts a special lustre to charity is that which the Apostle of the Gentiles ascribes to it, namely, that when charity is absent, every virtue meritorious of life everlasting disappears; and that when charity returns, every virtue flourishes anew in the soul. As to the first point, St Paul speaks so clearly, that this truth may not be questioned without incurring the note of temerity. *Though I speak*, says the Apostle, *with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Though I should have prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.**

145. St Augustine, speaking of the schismatics of his day, makes use of this text of the Apostle to prove that, had they parted with their substance to the poor (as some heretics have now and then done), nevertheless, being separated from the body of the faithful they would do this without having charity, and hence so generous an alms would avail them nothing. And he adds, that if on occasion of some persecution they had given up their bodies to be reduced to ashes at the stake, in witness of the faith common to them with Catholics, this heroic sacrifice would in no way have availed them, nor could they have hoped thereby to attain life everlasting; since, having miserably sundered the bond of charity they were rendered incapable of eternal reward.†

* Si linguis hominum loquar, et angelorum, caritatem autem non habeam, factus sum velut æs sonans, aut cymbalum tinniens. Si habuero prophetiam, et noverim mysteria omnia, et omnem scientiam: et si habuero omnem fidem ita ut montes transferam, caritatem autem non habuero, nihil sum. Et si distribuero in cibos pauperum omnes facultates meas: et si tradidero corpus meum ita ut ardeam, caritatem autem non habuero, nihil mihi prodest. I. ad Cor. xiij. 1.

† Si dispertiant ipsi etiam substantiam suam pauperibus, sicut multi, non

St Cyprian is of one mind with St Augustine, for he maintains that a Christian devoid of charity may indeed lay down his life in defence of the faith, but that he cannot be a martyr.* If then, martyrdom itself, which is the most noble and generous act a Christian can perform, loses all its lustre when separated from charity, what splendour can remain in virtues far below it, if those who practise them are unblest with this greatest of all virtues?

146. Nor does the Apostle speak less clearly on the second point we have undertaken to prove; for having said that without charity neither sacred eloquence, nor prophecy, nor knowledge, nor miracles, nor alms-deeds, nor martyrdom, can avail anything, he immediately adds, that when charity enters into the soul every virtue at once begins to flourish and to display its beauty. *Charity*, he says, *is patient, is kind, . . . charity vaunteth not herself, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*† To be brief, charity goes on her way surrounded by the goodly company of all the virtues, because she is the queen of all the virtues, and draws them in her wake as a noble and comely train.

147. In a word, we may liken charity to the sun. When this shrouds its rays, the flowers forthwith lose their charms, the hills their beauty of outline, the fields their verdure, the waters their clearness, the snow its whiteness; all things fade and seem

solum in catholicâ ecclesiâ, sed etiam in diversis hæresibus faciunt: si aliquâ ingruente persecutione, tradant ad flammas nobiscum corpus suum pro fide, quam pariter confitentur: tamen quia separati hæc agunt, non sufferentes invicem in dilectione, neque studentes servare unitatem spiritûs in vinculo pacis; caritatem utique non habendo, etiam cum illis omnibus, quæ nihil eis prosunt, ad æternam salutem pervenire non possunt. Lib. i., De Baptismo contra Donatistas, cap. 9

* Exhibere se non potest martyrem, qui fraternam non tenuit caritatem. Lib. de Unitate Ecclesiæ.

† Caritas patiens est, benigna est. Caritas non æmulatur, non agit perperam, non inflatur, non est ambitiosa, non quærit quæ sua sunt, non irritatur, non cogitat malum, non gaudet super iniquitate, congaudet autem veritati; omnia sufferт, omnia credit, omnia sperat, omnia sustinet. I. ad Cor. xiij. 14.

withered. But no sooner does the sun appear above the horizon, than verdure is restored to the meadows, the flowers recover their graceful tints, the skies their azure, the snow its whiteness, the waters their transparency, and all things are clothed anew in their former gladness. Thus when charity departs from a soul, every virtue is stripped of its supernatural charm and loses all lustre of merit, whatever may remain of a certain natural uprightness, which is, however, of no avail unto life everlasting. But when charity returns to shed its beauty on our souls, every virtue is at once sanctified and supernaturalised, rendered divine and deserving of an unfading crown. Well, then, might St Bernard exclaim, "O happy love of God! whence springs constancy in good deeds; purifying the affections, refining the mind, sanctifying the desires, illumining our good works, rendering our virtues fruitful, bestowing excellency of merit, raising us to the most sublime rewards!"*

148. St Thomas accounts as follows for this close dependence of the other virtues on charity:—"It is," he writes, "the mother, the root, and fountainhead whence the other virtues have their origin; inasmuch as it stamps them all with that divine character which renders them worthy of an everlasting reward."† This character is impressed by charity, because love directs the acts of the several virtues to God, and thus becomes a general virtue, regulating all the others, and imparting splendour to them all. This the Angelic Doctor teaches.‡ We may add another explanation of the way in which charity imparts a new life to the moral virtues, and renders them meritorious unto life everlasting, by admitting, with almost all divines, that it is the same as sanctifying grace. Now, since sanctifying grace raises man to a divine life, it consequently imparts to his every virtuous act a divine impress, and renders it deserving of an everlasting recompense. This would

* O felix amor, ex quo oritur strenuitas morum, puritas affectionum, subtilitas intellectuum, desideriorum sanctitas, operum claritas, virtutum fœcunditas, meritorum dignitas, præmiorum sublimitas! Tract. de Diligendo Deo.

† Caritas est mater omnium virtutum, et radix, in quantum est omnium virtutum forma. 1, 2, quæst. 62, art. 4.

‡ Caritas dici potest virtus generalis, in quantum scilicet ordinat actus omnium virtutum ad bonum divinum. 2. 2. quæst. 58, art. 6.

not be the case if the soul had not been raised by grace to so lofty a state. We see that the slightest attention vouchsafed by one of blood-royal is justly held to merit a reward it assuredly could not claim if performed by one of low estate. In regal purple what is made great account of is not the common wool whereof it is woven, but the dye, whose brightness of colour, and whose rarity, impart to it a beauty and a value which it did not originally possess. So, too, what God sets most store by in the practice of the moral virtues, is the grace and charity whereby they are dignified and raised to the merit of an eternal reward. Wretched then is he who, devoid of charity, is also stripped of every supernatural good. But happy the man in whom charity is kindled, because in the same measure as he shall advance in this virtue he will acquire all the others. By seizing on the queen bee, we are masters of the whole swarm; thus, too, he who attains charity, the queen of virtues, becomes master of all the others.

149. We may appeal to facts in confirmation of what we have established by authority and reasoning, and thus give practical proof that, apart from charity, the soul is empty of virtue, and that where it abides, they all of them flourish. Raymond de Lully, a man of high lineage, had devoted himself to the service of his king, in one of the most distinguished posts at court.* Never was there in this world a man more thoroughly enslaved by profane love; for when captivated by the beauty of the several persons upon whom he cast his eyes, he was always hovering about them with amorous glances and tender endearments; ever paying them court, ever seeking their company and conversation, like a silly moth about the flame of a candle. He thought and spoke of nothing but the object of his passion; and his delight was to pour forth in love-sick ditties the ardour of his idle affection. At length he fell into the snare of so ardent an attachment, that it left him no respite by day or by night. He had fallen in love with a lady of the court, no less virtuous than attractive, whom he followed about everywhere, giving vent to such extraordinary manifestations of his passion, that he seemed to have taken leave of his senses. His mad love led him so far beyond all bounds,

* Causino, Imperio della Ragione. Distinz. 13.

that being one day most richly attired, and mounted upon a blood-horse, on seeing from afar his lady-love going to church, he put spurs to his steed, and regardless of the sanctity of the place, of the altars, of the priests, of the divine mysteries, galloped into the church, to show and display, in the sight of his idol, his dexterous horsemanship. The people raised at once a great out-cry, and drove him forth as they would a madman. The reader need not be told that this gay cavalier was as devoid of every virtue, and as destitute of divine, as he was filled with profane, love. We now pass on to see how, in an instant, charity implanted every virtue in his heart.

150. No less astounded than grieved at this extravagance, the lady blushed for him, and bethought herself of a stratagem whereby to bring her hare-brained suitor to his senses. Her device proved most effectual. She took him apart, in a place where they could be seen by none; then uncovering her bosom, she showed him that it was being eaten away by a most loathsome cancer, and giving emphasis to this action by her words: "Behold," she said, "behold, unhappy man, on what you have set all your affections, and given all that heart which was made for God alone!" At this sight, at these words, Raymond grew pale, and was so stricken with horror, that he had not breath to utter a syllable, but returned home, overwhelmed with confusion. There, while considering the virtue of this lady, and reflecting on his own folly, he was illumined from on high with a ray of heavenly light, which kindled in his heart a spark of divine love. Wondrous to tell, this alone sufficed to enable him to trample under foot the carnal love which had enslaved him, and to appear at once adorned with every virtue. He forthwith distributed all his fortune to the poor; and having thus stripped himself of all worldly goods, betook himself to a desert place to lead a penitential life. In this solitude the spark of love, finding fresh fuel in his heart, grew into a conflagration of charity, so that he seemed to breathe, and feed on naught but love of God. If he gazed on the sun by day, or on the stars by night; if he turned to the fields or woods; everything seemed to invite him to the love of God. The chirping

of the birds, the murmuring of the fountains, the whisperings of the wind, were for him so many voices exhorting him to love. Fasting was not grievous unto him, nor prayer irksome, nor penance a burden, for love sweetened everything, and he could speak of nothing else but love. Thus, if on entering a town he was asked by any one whence he came, his answer was—"From Love:" whither he was going, he replied, "To Love:" what he desired—"Love:" what was his food—"Love:" on what he lived and thought—"On Love:" where he dwelt, he would reply—"In Love." Full as he was of amorous anguish, he went sighing through the fields in search of the object of his love, and as a prisoner bound in the fetters of his flesh, he yearned for deliverance, and panted after the possession of the Sovereign Good. One day, while wandering through a forest, uttering these exclamations, he chanced to come across a hermit asleep hard by a fountain. He roused him, with the inquiry whether there was any means of escaping from prison. The hermit, as one who was stricken with the dart of Love, understood forthwith the import of this question. "No, friend," replied he; "but we may rejoice that our prison is a prison of Love, for the bonds and fetters which confine us to this wretched body are made of gold." And then sighing with one accord for the possession of God, they tarried a long time at the side of the spring, melting into joyous tears. Having received from a Turkish slave a mortal blow, in hatred of the holy faith, his friends made speed to avenge him by the death of the murderer; but he interposed on his behalf, saying that Love forbade revenge. He had travelled through France, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Africa, preaching, instructing, and furthering works that might contribute to God's glory, when at last, after so saintly a life, the details of which are foreign to our present purpose, he was stoned by the Saracens, and his tomb was rendered glorious by God with a pyramid of fire, fitting emblem of his burning charity. The reader may now contrast Raymond devoid of love, with the same man when inflamed with divine love, and may thus fully understand that apart from charity there is no supernatural virtue in the Christian heart, and that by entering into a soul, it brings every virtue in its train.

CHAPTER III.

CERTAIN MEANS FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF DIVINE LOVE.

151. THE foremost means is to desire it earnestly, and to ask for it without ceasing. *Who will give me the wings of the dove*, says holy David, *for then will I fly away, and be at rest* in the bosom of God.* God alone can give us those wings wherewith our heavy and grovelling heart, weighed down to the earth of which it is made, may gain lightness and agility, and soaring aloft may reach a loving rest in the heart of God. But to obtain these light wings, ardent desires and fervent prayers are required. God wills to kindle in our hearts this sacred flame, and has said as much :—*I am come to send fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?*† But He also will have us ask for it frequently, and with great earnestness, ever repeating in our inmost hearts, *Pour light into our minds, and fill our hearts with love.* For it is not usual with God to bestow His gifts save in answer to prayer, and much less will He vouchsafe the gift of Charity, which so far surpasses every other, without being asked.

152. A second means is to subdue, by continual mortification, the enemy of divine love, which is self-love. This is precisely the object of the two foregoing Treatises. Now, by self-love I do not mean that reasonable and well-regulated affection whereby we love ourselves, our kinsfolk, and neighbours, for the Apostle says the express contrary ; but I mean that inordinate love which makes us seek our own convenience, our own satisfaction, our own honour and interest, without any regard for God and right reason.‡ This kind of self-love is the sworn foe of charity, which it banishes from our hearts. Hence it must be kept under by unwearying mortification. St Augustine puts this admir-

* Quis dabit mihi pennas, sicut columbæ : et volabo, et requiescam. Psal. liv. 7.

† Ignem veni mittere in terrâ : et quid volo, nisi ut accendatur? Luc. xj. 49.

‡ Nemo unquam carnem suam odio habuit ; sed nutrit, et fovit. Eph. v. 29.

ably when he says that the two loves established within us two hostile cities. Self-love erects a city of clay, which comes at length to openly set God at defiance; the love of God founds a heavenly city, which reaches even to the contempt of self. The former gives glory to itself, the latter glorifies God:* so that it is impossible that the soul can harbour at the same time two tendencies so opposite to each other.

153. Several reasons may be alleged for the irreconcilable enmity of these two loves—the one human, the other divine. The latter presupposes a mind enlightened to know the perfections of God; while, on the contrary, self-love darkens the mind and renders it incapable of understanding; for, as St Gregory teaches:—"Certain it is that love of self greatly dims the eye of the mind,† since, unlike divine love, it does not draw its motives of action from the light of faith (as does holy love) nor even from that of reason; but from the instinct of pleasure, ease, convenience, vanity, love of riches, or some other selfish interest." No wonder, then, that it extinguishes in the mind all the pious thoughts which are the fuel that kindle and feed this sacred fire within us. Moreover, the love of God requires a will tractable and docile to the inspirations of grace; self-love, on the contrary, hardens it. The former subjects the will to that of God, the latter renders it recalcitrant, since self-will is its idol. Ezekiel has most aptly described the sentiments of those who worship themselves, when he says, that they become as gods to themselves—that they set up their own hearts as the heart of God, preferring their affections and unruly inclinations to the divine will.‡

154. If, then, inordinate love of self and the love of God are two irreconcilable enemies, it is necessary that this pernicious love be kept under, be thwarted, mortified and, as far as may be,

* Fecerunt civitates duas amores duo: terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei; cœlestem vero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui. Illa in se ipsâ, hæc in Domino gloriatur. De Civit. Dei, lib. xiv. cap. 28.

† Scimus quia vehementer claudit oculum cordis privatus amor. Hom. 4, in Ezech.

‡ Dixisti, Deus ego sum ... et dedisti cor tuum, quasi cor Dei. Ezech. xxviij. 2.

extinguished, in order that love divine may enter into our hearts and consume them with its holy flame. The Philistines carried the ark of the Lord into a temple in which the idol of Dagon was exposed to public veneration, and what was the consequence? The next morning, on opening the temple gates, they found the image cast down from the altar, and lying in fragments on the threshold of the sanctuary.* What other truth would God give us to understand by this marvellous event, but that the idol of self-love and the ark of heavenly charity cannot abide together in the temple of our soul? In order that divine love may enter and possess our heart, it must first, by unwearying mortification, rid itself of the inordinate love of self.

155. Wherefore St Augustine teaches that the growth of charity depends on the diminution of self-love, and that self-love is wholly extinct in him whose charity is perfect.† And he concludes by saying, that whoever would foster this heavenly flame in his breast, must be on the watch to uproot every imperfect inclination by continual self-denial.‡ To this does Gerson allude in his well-known saying:—"Your progress in the school of divine love will be in the exact measure of the violence you do to yourself by thwarting your own will."§ A vase cannot be filled with sweet-scented liquor unless it first be emptied of all else. So God cannot pour into our hearts the priceless balsam of divine love, before, by dint of mortification, we have purged it of every imperfect attachment, especially of that we bear to self, which, being most deeply rooted, is calculated to do us greatest harm.

156. But here it must be borne in mind, that the effects of self-love are not all alike. Some are easily detected by their deformity and repulsiveness; such as are the grievous sins which sprout from this evil root. *In the latter days*, says St Paul, *men shall be lovers of themselves*,‖ and he goes on to unfold what fruits this love of self shall bear within them. *They shall be covetous*,

* Ecce Dagon jacebat pronus in terrâ, ante arcam Domini. I. Reg. v. 3.

† Nutrimentum caritatis est imminutio cupiditatis; perfectio, nulla cupiditas. Lib. 83 Quæst. q. 56.

‡ Quisquis igitur eam nutrire vult, instet imminuendis cupiditatibus.

§ Tantum proficies, quantum tibi ipsi vim intuleris. De Imit., lib. i. cap. 25.

‖ In novissimis diebus erunt homines semetipsos amantes.

*haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent . . . lovers of pleasure more than of God.**

157. Besides these detestable fruits, self-love bears others that are not so easily detected, as they consist in slighter faults and imperfections which at times escape the eye even of spiritual persons; as, for instance, to eat, drink, take rest and recreation; to devote ourselves to occupations suitable to our condition, not out of the virtuous motive of their fitness, and still less from the hallowed purpose of doing God's will, but only to gratify ourselves by feeling complacency in our own actions; to listen with pleasure to our own praises; to be put out when anything unfavourable is said of us; to resent offences; to chafe under admonition; to be slow to forgive, at least heartily; to indulge personal attachments, not indeed such as imply any dangerous affection, but loving with too much partiality and fondness; to omit good works out of human respect; to give way to over-refinement in dress, lodgings, furniture, and in a thousand other ways; so that there is no action, not only indifferent, but even holy, which is not tainted in some measure by self-love, owing to some wrong attachment of the heart. As St Augustine says, "Vanity glides into the very contempt of vanity, and renders us vain because we are superior to vanity." †

158. This being pre-supposed, it will not be enough for such as aim at union with God by perfect Charity to mortify self-love in regard of what is patently evil, and the grievous sins into which its irregular upheavings drive us; but we must further thwart it in slighter matters, in those shortcomings and defects to which it continually inclines us. For a mirror to lose its lustre, it is not necessary to soil it with blotches and filth; it suffices that it be covered with a little dust, or tarnished even by a breath. So, too, our mind is debarred of the supernatural light of actual grace—the

* Cupidi, elati, superbi, blasphemi, parentibus non obedientes, ingrati, scelesti, sine affectione, sine pace, criminatores, incontinentes—voluptatum amatores magis quam Dei. II. ad Tim. iij. 2.

† Saepe homo de ipso vanæ gloriæ contemptu vanius gloriatur; ideoque non jam de ipso vanæ gloriæ contemptu glorietur. Non enim eam contemnit, cum gloriatur intus. Conf., lib. x., cap. 38.

vehicle of that genial heat which inflames our hearts with love of God—not only when defiled with the stains of grievous transgression, but when tarnished by venial sins and slight failings. Further, God is not only an ardent, but also a jealous lover, Who, even in punishment of faults more or less trifling, grows cool, and withholds from the soul His more ardent, refined, and tender love.

159. But, you may urge, it is too irksome ever to be standing with a rod in hand to correct the slightest deviation of the soul from the maxims of faith, or the dictates of right reason. I own it to be so,—with St Gregory, I avow it.* Yet must it be done if we would attain the perfection of the priceless treasure of divine charity; for Christ declares to us with His own lips, that in order to be united to Him, and to be His true lovers, we must unceasingly deny ourselves.† Still, this is no reason for losing heart or being discouraged, because it is the property of God's grace to render easy what is in itself difficult, to soften what is hard, to make smooth what is rough. It will cause you to find a sweet relish in your struggle with inordinate self-love, in your mortification of yourself, in your denial of your own will. So that you will not fail to overcome with ease this formidable enemy of divine love.

160. I trust I may succeed in convincing you of this truth by a picture that I have conceived in my own mind. You are aware that, before her conversion, St Mary of Egypt was a net which the demon spread by which he might entrap souls, a snare wherein the wicked one held them fast, in order to drag them to hell. Now, suppose that Abbot Zosimus, who attended her at her death, had met with the unhappy woman while enslaved by lascivious attachments and wholly plunged in vice; and that, endowed with the spirit of prophecy, he had addressed her thus: "Be of good cheer, Mary of Egypt, the day will soon come when you will turn your back on your lovers and attachments, and will lead

* Fortasse laboriosum non est homini relinquere sua; sed valde laboriosum est relinquere se ipsum. Minus quippe est, abnegare quod habet; valde autem multum est, abnegare quod est. Hom. 32, in Evang.

† Qui vult venire post me, abneget semetipsum. Matth. xvj. 24.

the life of a hermit, in the lonesomeness of a forest. You will set out from the city with only three loaves, and when they shall have been consumed, your food shall be the wild herbs of the wood, and the water of the well shall be your drink. No roof shall shelter you from the frosts and rigours of winter, nor shall any garment protect your limbs. Amid the burning heats of summer you will have to remain exposed to the sun's most fiery rays. Your head, heretofore decked with so many gauds, shall be beaten with hail or pelting rain, or struck by the darts of the fiery sun. Your breast, now resplendent with jewels, shall be smitten by your own hand with hard stones; the eyes that now gleam in your face shall become two fountains of tears." "What are you telling me?" might she have said. "I retire to the desert, and live amid such hardships! Rather would I die than lead so painful a life." "But hold! take courage, these mortifications will be far sweeter to you than the pleasures you now enjoy. You will find more relish in fasting than is now afforded you by dainties and a well-appointed table. Sweeter shall be your slumbers on the bare ground than they are now on a couch of down." "Hold your peace!" would she have cried. "Begone! these are but foolish day-dreams, delirious ravings!" And yet the fact is, that after having led a life austere as we have described for forty years, St Mary of Egypt, when death came to release her, was forced to acknowledge to Abbot Zosimus, that what she had once believed impossible had really come to pass; that a life so rigorous had proved unspeakably sweet and delightful to her; that mortification, penance, and tears had been agreeable; that, while living in suffering with God, she had felt more contentment and gladness than while rejoicing with the world.

161. We must consequently give implicit credence to the teaching of St Augustine, who maintains that it is the property of divine grace to sweeten what to our self-love is bitter and repulsive, and to render easy that which a less perfect love finds difficult. If we doubt the teaching of the great Doctor of the West, we may at least credit his own experience. In his Confessions, he tells us of the severe conflict the carnal love of his body excited within him, by picturing to his imagination the freedom

and enjoyments of his former life, sparing neither artifice nor effort to keep him back from God. But when he had set carnal love at defiance, he felt a great delight, an intense sweetness in crossing his inordinate inclinations, and rejoiced at being deprived of the very pleasures which he had heretofore so much dreaded to lose.* Now, what was it that made St Augustine find such ease and delight in self-denial and in the mortification of the flesh and its senses, which had hitherto been so accustomed to evil? It was divine grace, and that alone, as he himself avows.† The reader, then, must not be disheartened, but rather encourage himself to subdue by unwearied mortification this inveterate foe of divine charity—I mean self-love—and to combat his imperfect inclinations, resting assured that, with the help of God's grace, all will become easy and sweet.

162. The third means is often to ponder, especially in time of our ordinary meditation, the motives best suited to excite our will to the love of the Sovereign Good. This was the custom of the Psalmist, who informs us that by means of such considerations he felt the flames of divine charity enkindled within him.‡ For a piece of wood to take fire, it is not enough that it be in a state to burn, or that the flame be at hand; it must, moreover, be put to the fire. So, too, for the flame of divine love to be kindled in our hearts, it suffices not that it be prepared by mortification and the putting down of self-love, or that God be a fire capable of consuming every heart; but the soul must, moreover, approach this divine furnace by means of considerations and motives which are capable of bringing home the grandeur and beauty of the Almighty.

163. The motives of which we have been speaking, although simply countless, may be reduced to the following:—First, God is worthy of love; secondly, God is most loving. These few

* Quam suave mihi subito factum est, carere suavitatibus nugarum: et quas amittere metus fuerat, jam dimittere gaudium erat. Lib. ix. Conf., cap. 1.

† Ejiciebas enim eas (Domine) a me, vera tu, et summa suavitas; ejiciebas, et intrabas pro eis omni voluptate dulcior. Eodem loco.

‡ Concaluit cor meum intra me, et in meditatione mea exardescet ignis. Psal. xxxviij. 4.

words are pregnant with such vast import, that eternity will be too short for even the angelic intelligences to exhaust their full meaning. Lovableness demands love, and demands it in the measure of its deserts. The loadstone attracts iron, and the loveliness of an object ravishes the love of our hearts. And as the larger the magnet, the greater its force of attraction; so, too, the greater a person's loveliness, the more effectual are his claims on our affection. But how can we, purblind moles, sunk as we are in the earth, succeed in obtaining anything like an adequate notion of the nature and greatness of God's lovableness, since we have no eye to gaze at His goodness, or to delight in His ravishing charms. Despite all this, we may, in compliance with the rule laid down by the Apostle, from the traces of good we discover here and there on this earth, arrive in a certain proportion at a rough outline of that far more excellent goodness which renders our God so worthy of all love.

164. You may, therefore, represent to your minds all the beauty and goodness that have ever met your gaze, adding all the loveliness and excellence that your poor notions can suggest; then may you secretly say to yourself, All this beauty and goodness have God for their Author; for He is the Creator of all, and all things are found again in Him. But this is not all, since in God we are able to discover a beauty and goodness greater beyond compare; since He is able to create beings far more lovely and excellent, without ever exhausting His power, or failing throughout eternity to find new inventions of beauty within Himself—the boundless store of all that beauty and excellence that He is so well able to pour forth out of Himself. Nay rather, the beauty and goodness proper to Him is infinitely beyond that which He can impart; for the perfections of God surpass by an infinite excess all the beauty and goodness that is possible in His creatures.

165. The same process may be applied to the holiness of God. Call to mind whatever pure, blameless, perfect, and heroic traits you have witnessed or read of in the lives of the Saints; and then say,—All this holiness is in God, for it has been imparted by Him to His servants. But further, He is well able to create

any number of men, each more perfect and holy than all before, in a never-ending progression. He is in actual possession of whatever holiness He could thus bestow in succession on His creatures. We ought, however, rather to say that the holiness of God is infinitely greater, since between that which is proper to Him, and the holiness He can impart to His creatures, there is a boundless distance.

166. Proceeding onwards, you may reason as follows: What is the power so greatly admired in the rulers of this world, when after all they are unable to create a single midge, or to make a grain of sand out of nothing? How boundless then the power of God, Who has drawn out of nothing the vast mechanism of the universe; and by a simple act of His will, is able to call into being countless worlds still more vast, more beautiful, and more wondrous! What is that majesty whereby our rulers inspire us with such awe; like us, they are but sacks full of worms and corruption, though covered over with a pleasing mask? The true and supreme Majesty is that of God, in Whose sight the pillars of heaven tremble; for His majesty is in His essence, and not in mere outward circumstance. What is the liberality that so attracts us in some men, although they can give but little, and by giving impoverish themselves, since they take away from their own store to add to that of others? Boundless is the liberality and beneficence of God, Who, imparting all, giving all, loses nothing by His gift, but abides in Himself infinitely rich and wealthy. What is the knowledge which the learned set so much store by, since that which they know not infinitely exceeds what they do know; and their very knowledge teems with error, obscurity, and uncertainty? God it is Whose knowledge is unbounded, because He knows all, sees all, comprehends each and everything, without any danger of error; and His knowledge embraces all possible things in every conceivable circumstance and condition. You may discourse in like manner on the other divine perfections, and remain overwhelmed by a sweet and loving admiration at beholding this infinite excellence. And for all your endeavours you can never attain the conception of what God really is. Rejoice then that His greatness so far transcends

your mental powers, and be content to be swallowed up in the boundless ocean of all loveliness laying claim to our love.

167. At the same time you will be confounded for having so little love for One so deserving of your love. If, on a beauteous queen appearing in public, decked out in regal attire, you were to notice a low plebeian not deigning to cast even a glance upon her, and repeating, while fixing his gaze on her shadow (with that alone enraptured), "Oh, how entrancing!" what would you say? You would set down the man as a fool for staring at a dark shadow, and neglecting the charms of the queen, radiant as the sun. Now, what more is all the beauty and goodness spread over creation than a mere shadow of the divine perfections? Yet this shadow it is that you have loved, refusing your love to the Sun of infinite beauty, of boundless goodness and perfection. Be confounded, then, at these considerations, and let your confusion and shame stir you up to the exclusive and ardent love of that Sovereign Good, Who deserves all the affection of your heart.

168. But God is not only lovable, He is also loving. Besides claiming our love, He moves us to it by His love; whence He deserves a return of love, since love can be repaid only by a corresponding love. The rule whereby we may measure the love that God bears to us must be His benefits. And in truth, as St Basil justly observes, "If we but seriously ponder these benefits, nothing will avail more to inflame our hearts with charity, since nothing can give us so adequate an idea of the greatness of God's love for us miserable creatures."* And he instances the brutes, which love those that treat them kindly, as we see in dogs, which show a tender attachment to one who feeds them with a mouthful of bread. Nay, more, when God would reproach His people Israel with their want of love and their ingratitude, He contrasts them in the Sacred Writings with oxen and beasts of burden, which acknowledge the masters by whom they are fed; and then He complains of them, saying, "I have begotten and nourished you as my much-loved children, and have exalted you with high

* Caritas erga Deum conficitur datis ab eo beneficiis recto judicio, æquitateque æstimandis, iisque grato animo persequendis. In Reg. Brevior. Quæst. 212.

favour, and you neither know Me nor love Me."* Whence, the saintly Doctor concludes that, "if in the very brutes, without any choice of will, but by mere natural impulse, love springs up for those that feed them, much more is it fitting that the love of God should be kindled within us, if we fairly, and with a thankful soul, consider the manifold and great benefits God bestows upon us; this being a sentiment which, without learned research, but by a certain natural tenderness, should be awakened in reasonable souls."† So then it necessarily follows, that not to love God, or to love Him but slightly, arises from failing to consider His great benefits to us, and the immense love which is reflected in them.

169. Of these several benefits some belong to the natural order, such as creation, preservation, health, strength, property, the endowments of our body, the qualities of our soul, the countless natural gifts God imparts to us at every moment. Other benefits belong to the order of grace, as redemption, whereby, at the cost of stripes, of blood-shedding, of a most cruel death, God has redeemed us from everlasting punishment; the unspeakable gift of His most Holy Body in the Eucharist; sanctifying grace, which raises the soul to the life of God; the helps of actual grace daily imparted to us in so many inspirations, lights, and motions whereby we are spurred on to good; and the many other means bestowed upon us for the attainment of our everlasting salvation; —benefits, in a word, that we cannot treat of in detail just now, since to do so fittingly would require whole volumes. I will only say, with St Bernard, that amongst all the benefits of God, the

* Quod quidem etiam naturaliter inesse in brutis animalibus videmus: siquidem animadvertimus etiam canes eos diligere, qui sibi panem subministrant. Intelligimus autem hoc etiam in iis, quæ criminatorie dicta sunt ab Isaiâ prophetâ hoc modo: *Filios genui, et exaltavi: ipsi autem spreverunt me. Cognovit bos possessorem suum, et asinus præsepe domini sui; Israel autem me non cognovit, et populus meus me non intellexit.* Eod. loco.

† Quemadmodum autem bovi et asino, ex beneficio ejus, unde aluntur, naturaliter suâ sponte adversus ipsum amor excitatur: sic nos quoque, si recto judicio, gratoque animo Dei in nos beneficia tot, tantaque susceperimus, fieri non poterit quin ipsum eorum auctorem diligamus, quod secundum naturam, ut ita dicam, et sine ullâ doctrinâ, per se hujusmodi affectio sanis animis ingeneratur. Eod. loco.

most effectual for kindling within us the flames of charity is the Passion of our most loving Saviour, for none other so clearly shows the ardour and, I hesitate not to affirm, the excess of God's love towards us. This should be the usual matter of the meditations of him who aspires to perfect charity. "Above all, sweet Jesus, do Thou give me a relish for the bitter chalice of Thy sorrowful Passion. This it is which most easily wins our love, which most sweetly ravishes our affection, most justly claims it, binds it most powerfully, kindles it most vehemently." *

170. A soldier, having left his country, started on a long and devout pilgrimage to Palestine.† He visited the several holy places, with signs of great piety. Having reached the top of the Mount of Olives, whence Christ had ascended gloriously into Heaven, on beholding the impress left there by our Saviour's sacred feet, he became absorbed in the consideration of the sufferings, goodness, and love of Jesus, and inflamed with a reciprocal love, he began to melt into a copious flood of sweet tears. As this contemplation continued to intensify the ardour of his charity, he could no longer control the anguish of his heart; it broke, and there he lay, the victim of Divine Love. His friends, astonished at his unexpected death, had his body opened, and discovered graven on his heart these touching words, "My love is Jesus Christ." If we only fix our minds frequently on the cruel sufferings of our Redeemer, and on the immensity of His Love, I do not say that our hearts will break, for we must not aspire to so rare a privilege; but their hardness will at least be softened, and so shall we begin to love with ardour that God Who so loves us.

* Super omnia reddit amabilem te mihi, Jesu bone, calix quem bibisti, opus nostræ redemptionis. Hoc omnino amorem nostrum vindicat sibi. Hoc, inquam, est quod nostram devotionem et blandius allicit, et justius exigit, et arctius stringit, et afficit vehementius. In Cant. Serm. 20.

† Spec. Exemp. Dist. 9, Exemp. 79.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTICULAR ACTS OF LOVE WE OUGHT TO PRACTISE IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE DIVINE LOVE. EXPLANATION OF THE FIRST ACT, NAMELY, THE LOVE OF COMPLACENCY.

171. He who loves his friend with sincere friendship, that is, not for any selfish motive, nor with a view to any advantage he may himself expect, but for the sake of his friend, rejoices at the good he discovers in that friend, as if it were his own; he gives his friend the first place in his heart, and sets him above all who may be compared with him; desires for him every advantage that is wanting to him; and should he chance to fail in anything towards that friend, or in any way to offend him, he repents bitterly. Thus, whoever loves God with a love of Charity—which is the bond of real friendship between God and the soul, as we have heretofore shown—rejoices at the immense good wherein God abounds; prefers God to whatever may be put in competition with Him; is anxious to procure God what is yet wanting to Him, and is deeply distressed by the offences committed against God, whether by himself or by others. Whence we may gather that the acts of divine love may be classed under these four heads, the love of Complacency, the love of Preference, the love of Benevolence, and the love of Repentance. We will begin with the first, to which we will devote the present Chapter.

172. A mother who tenderly loves her son, rejoices at his advantages as if they were her own. If she hears of his progress at school, of his excelling his schoolfellows in knowledge and in the esteem of his master, and of great hopes being entertained concerning him, she rejoices within herself no less than if this progress were her own. So too, if she receive the joyful intelligence that her dear son has been promoted to an honourable office at court; or has succeeded to a rich inheritance; or has been raised to a high rank in the army, she is glad and even beside herself with joy, no less than if this good fortune had fallen to her own

lot. If you ask why she thus rejoices and is happy, the sole reason is that she loves her son no less than herself.

173. So too, if any one love God—I do not say as himself, which would not be to love, but to do a grievous injustice to God's peerless excellence but—far more than himself; on beholding in God all possible good and unfailing perfection and excellence, and that his highest conceptions of power, wisdom, loveliness, goodness, majesty, immensity, grandeur, amiability, fall infinitely short of the divine attributes; and that the Almighty is supremely happy and blessed in Himself; that the bliss of all the citizens of Heaven taken together is but as a drop of water in comparison with the boundless ocean of gladness which God contains in Himself; he cannot do less than rejoice at the immeasurable good he discovers in the object beloved, and feel the same complacency, delight and contentment, as if all these perfections and advantages belonged to himself.

174. When Joseph's brethren brought their father the joyous news that Joseph was not dead—as Jacob had thought—and not only alive, but living in the height of grandeur and prosperity, having been made ruler of Egypt, Holy Writ tells us that such was the joy of the Patriarch on learning the prosperity of his favourite son that *his spirit revived.** But when with his own eyes he beheld Joseph clad in purple and fine linen, with a collar of gold round his neck, the royal ring on his finger, and when, putting his arms round his neck, he clasped him to his bosom, he felt his heart overflow with so much joy that he could not help crying out, *Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.*† Whence this joy and gladness at the sight of Joseph and his grandeur, but from the ardent love the Patriarch bore his son?

175. How, then, shall it be possible for us, if we truly love our God more than all else, not to feel a gratification equal to our love on beholding Him endowed with such boundless perfections as to transcend our every thought and idea? And since this love

* Joseph filius tuus vivit, et ipse dominatur in omni terrâ Ægypti: revixit spiritus ejus. Genes. xlv. 26.

† Jam lætus moriar, quia vidi faciem tuam. Ibid. xlvj. 30.

(as is surely meet) is greater than all other love, so will our delight in seeing Him abounding in all good surpass every other delight; thus shall we imitate those blessed spirits, who, ravished at the sight of the immense perfection of their beloved Lord, sing a never-ceasing Alleluia, and encourage each other to rejoice, to exult, and to pay Him the tribute of never-ending praise, and of immortal glory.*

176. I will further add that this delight in God's infinite perfections ought so to increase in the hearts of them that love Him, as to serve them as a solace amid the trials of the present life. And as a mother who is afflicted by disease or by some grievous disaster, is so gladdened on hearing of her son being promoted to some dignity or gaining some lawsuit with a great increase of wealth, that she forgets her grief and feels her pains no more, or if she feel them, they are no longer irksome to her, because assuaged by the joy inspired by the well-being of him she loves; thus, amid the misfortunes and trials that hem us in on all sides in this miserable life, on beholding our God not only free from, but beyond the reach of, the evils which assail us; on seeing that He is most contented, most blessed, and most happy in the fulness of all possible good, possessed in an eminent and unspeakable manner; should we rejoice with such joy as may temper the poignancy of our sufferings.

177. Such was the conduct of the prophet Habacuc, when, amid the miseries of a most calamitous epoch, he sang with gladness and content: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive shall be frustrated, and the fields yield no food; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, will I joy in God my Saviour,† seeing that He abounds in all good, is overwhelmed with all manner of happiness." We, likewise, if only there be in our minds a deep

* Et audivi quasi vocem tubæ magnæ . . . dicentium: Alleluia; quoniam regnavit Dominus Deus noster omnipotens. Gaudeamus, et exultemus, et demus gloriam ei. Apoc. x. 6.

† Ficus non florebit, et non erit germen in vineis: mentietur opus olivæ, et arva non afferent cibum. Abscindetur de ovili pecus, et non erit armentum

knowledge of God—if His love be kindled in our breasts—shall be consoled in our poverty by the thought of His infinite riches; in our mishaps, by calling to mind His sovereign blessedness; in our griefs, by reflecting that He cannot suffer, and is in no wise liable to the slightest evil; our melancholy will be cheered by the thought of His tranquilness, and the comfort and delight we shall take in the fulness of His boundless excellences will serve to smooth over the roughness of our trials. Happy the man whose ardent love of God raises him to rejoice at His immeasurable perfections, for even here below will he bear within him a well-spring of everlasting happiness, and will enjoy on earth a foretaste of paradise; for the paradise that awaits him on high consists precisely in that gladsome love which springs from the sight of God's greatness. Thus St Laurence Justinian says: "To rejoice in Thee, my God, and in Thy sovereign perfection, is a beginning of the life of bliss."*

178. It was in this love of complacency that a saintly young girl of the age of fourteen was happily immersed, and in it sweetly found her death.† Having consecrated herself to this divine love from her earliest years, it was in a short time so kindled in her, that the more she loved the Sovereign Good, the more her heart was inflamed with the desire of increasing this love. While, on one Christmas Eve, she was praying in a chapel, and pouring forth the ardour of her affection in loving sighs, the Blessed Virgin appeared to her, with the Infant Jesus in her arms. How much this vision served to increase the flames of love divine in the heart of this guileless maid may be more easily imagined than told. The more so, when the Virgin-Mother stretching out her arms towards the maiden, said, "Take, my dear child, take this Divine Infant to your bosom: I give Him to you; embrace and caress Him at your pleasure." Seeing herself thus put in possession of her treasure, the girl devoutly took Jesus in her

in præsepibus. Ego autem in Domino gaudebo, et exultabo in Deo Jesu meo. Habacuc. iij. 18, 19.

* Hæc est inchoatio beatæ vitæ, gaudere in te de te. In Ligno Vitæ: de Carit., cap. 10.

† Patrignani, in Quatuor Coronis Exemp. Coron. 2.

arms, and as she clasped Him to her breast, her loving ardour changed into joy and gladness, nothing short of ecstasy. The Divine Infant allowed full scope to the affectionate tenderness of the loving maiden. Seeing her at last at the height of her happiness, He said, "Well, beloved Spouse, do you truly love Me?" Kindled with a holy love she replied: "Yes, I do love Thee; aye, even more than my life." Taking delight in these loving transports, the Divine Child rejoined, "But is what you say really true? Do you, indeed, love Me so much? Everybody professes to love Me, but I meet with few who really know what it is to love Me." The virgin replied: "I love Thee, yes, I love Thee more than my own heart." "But how much more than your own heart do you love Me?" asked the Divine Infant. At this sweet questioning the flames of love were kindled apace in her breast, and not finding words wherewith to give vent to her affection, she said, "My Saviour, as words fail my tongue, let my heart tell whether I love Thee." At this point, her heart, overwrought by the vehemence of love and joy, could contain itself no longer, and as she sweetly breathed her last, the fervent damsel continued repeating, in languishing tones, "Jesu, my Love, I love Thee, I love Thee." Our Lord took to Himself this beauteous soul, and bore it into paradise. I know that our slow and languid hearts are unable to take the same delight in God, to find the joys which the burning love of this maiden displayed. But we may, at least, so light up in our hearts the sweet fires of divine charity as by degrees to feel as much pleasure in the boundless perfections of God, as we do in our own paltry advantages. For if it be true that a friend is another self,* it must needs be that any one who cherishes a friendly love for God will regard the Almighty's sovereign perfections as if they were his own, and take no less delight in them than if they belonged to himself.

* Amicus est alter ego.

CHAPTER V.

EXPLANATION OF THE LOVE OF PREFERENCE, OR THE APPRECIATIVE LOVE OF GOD.

179. THE Love of Complacency, which we have just now been explaining, is usually full of sweetness and delight. The Love of Preference, or Appreciative Love, which comes next under consideration, is full of vigour, for it consists in a manly and steady preference of God to all created things, even to one's self, arising from the high esteem which has been formed of the infinite goodness, and the sovereign and incomparable excellence of God. This love is the most proper act of divine Charity, since God, being without an equal, claims to be loved with an affection to which none other may be accounted equal. The Roman Senate, as St Augustine relates, admitted into its temples without restriction the gods of the nations subjected to its empire; thus making use of religion as of a bond of union. The only god it excluded was the God of the Christians, because, as they said, He claimed to be the only God. What impious policy! For that very reason our God ought to have been admitted to receive the homage of public worship, since the most characteristic mark of the Godhead is to brook no equal. Hence we treat God as He should be treated when we allow none to compare with Him in our esteem, but set Him before all and every one, and allow Him to hold sway in our heart without partner or rival.

180. To have a clear idea of this we must point out the distinction between sensible and appreciative love. The former consists in a certain sweet sensibility of affection, which is felt in the heart, and is at times made manifest by sighs and tears. The love of appreciation, though not unfrequently barren of certain gratifying emotions, nevertheless holds God in so great esteem as to set the consideration of Him far above any evil or good imaginable, and is ready to forego the latter, and to submit to the former, rather than offend or displease God: nay, if this love be perfect, it will sacrifice any and every thing for the sole motive of

His good pleasure. Tenderness of love, though it makes a fair appearance, and wins great credit for itself, is but an accidental property of charity, though, doubtless, it is worthy of esteem. Appreciative love is, in very deed, the essence and the life-blood of charity, though it be wanting in this attractive, exterior, and sometimes even allows those who are possessed of it to be in an agony of fear, because, while they really do love, they believe themselves to have no love at all.

181. This may be seen in the instance of a mother of a family, who, in her fondness for her little lap-dog, has it always in her arms and on her lap. She lavishes on it countless caresses, kisses without number. She washes and combs it, and is so anxiously careful of it, that at times she forgets to take care of her own child. Nay, she will even beat the latter for striking her pet. Must it not, then, be concluded that this foolish woman loves the little brute more than her child? Why not, seeing she is so sparing to him of the marks of affection lavished on this useless little animal? But you mistake. Suppose it happened to the mother that her son were to fall dangerously ill, at once she would be plunged into anxiety and grief. Unmindful of her much-loved pet-dog, she would cling to her child's bedside, nor ever leave him by day or in the watches of the night. And if she were to see him given up by the physicians and on the point of death, how frantic would be her grief and her anguish! Suppose, still further, that under these circumstances the physician were to say to her, "My good lady, to save your son no other remedy will avail but to bleed your lap-dog to death, and to compound the patient's medicine with its blood." "No other remedy?" would the sorrowing mother reply; "take out your knives at once, sharpen your lancets, let it be flayed and bled to death; let the poor animal die, provided only my boy's life be saved!"

182. In this mother two loves have to be considered,—the sensible and the appreciative love,—the former for the dog, the latter for her son. But to which of the two must we give the preference? Which is to be deemed the best? Who does not see the answer to this question? Appreciative love is the best: in virtue of this she makes of her son the account that is fitting,

and prefers him to everything else, even should it cost the life of the animal so dear to her. The like holds good in our case. A devout person loves God with sensible tenderness and sweet affection; he may shed tears of love, and find all his delight therein. This sensible love is by no means to be despised, being a gift of God, which is most profitable if good use be made of it. But if it be not joined to the love of preference, whereby we are ready to forego, for God's sake, earthly advantages, wealth, kindred, honours, comforts, and even life itself; willing to confront suffering, torments, aye, and death into the bargain, when God's love requires it, it is of no great account: for though it appear great, it is little; though it seem strong, it is weak and womanish. Manly and vigorous love is that which, holding God in due esteem, prefers Him to every good and ill that may befall us. This is love worthy of God.

183. The great English Chancellor and martyr, Sir Thomas More, has left us a memorable example of this appreciative love of God. He was shut up in a darksome dungeon, accused of no other crime than that of having refused obedience to the wicked edicts of Henry VIII., which were at variance with the Christian religion and repugnant to the conscience of a Catholic minister. "No," said Sir Thomas, "I will never yield." "Very well, then, you shall rot in these chains; you shall be deprived of your office, your fortune, your wife, your children; and lastly, the hand of the executioner shall cut short the thread of your life." "I am ready to lose all rather than lose my God." While thus debating with himself, his wife visits the dungeon, sent by the king to conquer, by her womanly weakness, her husband's brave heart. She appears before him with doleful countenance and dishevelled hair, her two youngest children at her side. The first assault she makes upon his constancy is by tears mingled with heart-rending sighs. She then tries to move him with words no less tender than effectual for the overthrow of the strong citadel of his magnanimous soul. "How long, then, Thomas, will you bear to behold your wife and children reduced to this wretched plight, deprived of their income, which the king has confiscated; rendered homeless by the law's award; without bread, without shelter?

Take pity on yourself, take pity on me and these tender babes. Yield, I beg, to the requests of your sovereign, and, by an act of compliance, relieve your sufferings and ours. Children, plead your cause; fall at the feet of your father; ask whether he would have you rich or poor. Your lot is in your own hands." On hearing these words, Thomas felt himself moved in the very depths of his heart, for he had a tender, and not a flinty heart; then turning to his wife, whose name was Alice, he replied, "If, to gratify my king, I should displease my God, for how long, think you, should we enjoy the honours of our country, the wealth of our establishment, the favour of our king?" She answered, that the time of life to which they had both attained would justify them in looking forward to at least twenty years more. "Twenty years more!" replied he, in astonishment. "Must I, then, for the sake of this brief span, offend my God, lose His friendship, forego the never-ending bliss promised me above, if faithful to my duty? You are mad, my good wife, to press so unfair a bargain upon me."*

184. Let others admire in holy souls the sweet intoxication of love—its ardours, sighs, tears, raptures, flights, ecstasies; for my part, I set far greater store by the love which puts nothing in comparison with God when He is in question, which cheerfully foregoes every advantage rather than be parted from the Sovereign Good. For if those ecstasies, those melting moods of love are of any account, it is only inasmuch as they pave the way for this love of appreciation or of preference, and cause it to reign exclusively in the soul.

185. But it must be remembered that apppreciative love though ever most desirable in itself, can rise to higher and higher degrees of perfection. If you feel so disposed that having, on the one hand, present to your mind any earthly good or evil which may befall and, on the other, a single grievous offence of God you despise them all rather than offend His infinite goodness, and choose, as St Augustine says, rather to die for His love than to live in His disfavour;† if, I say, you find yourself in such dis-

* Stulta mercatrix es, O Aloysia.

† Deo dilecto emori, quam offenso vivere.

positions, you have attained the first degree of this love, which we are all of us bound to reach, under pain of incurring God's awful displeasure. If, further, you are ready to sacrifice every gratification of appetite, be it of pleasure, wealth, or honour, nay, even life itself, amid countless tortures, rather than displease this most perfect and lovable Being by a slight fault, you will have attained a still higher degree of perfection in this love of preference. Lastly, should the esteem you have of this sovereign, unspeakable, incomprehensible, Good increase to such an extent that you are ever ready to fulfil whatever God wills, though He impose it not as a precept, but propose it as a counsel; if, furthermore, you are ready to promote His greater glory and honour at the cost of every toil, suffering, and even of death itself; rest assured that your appreciative love has reached a very high degree of eminent perfection.

186. If then we would advance in the school of divine love, we must aspire with all the fervour of our hearts to the most sublime degrees of divine charity, in the conviction that whatever we may undergo or do for God is a trifle, and a mere nothing. If for His love we were to waste away and be ground down to powder, what would this be in comparison with His infinite deserts? The more so, as by preferring the Sovereign Good to whatever evil or good may fall to our lot, we are only returning the love wherewith God has first loved us; since He has set our everlasting welfare before His own most precious life, one instant of which far surpasses in value the lives of men and Angels, and of all possible creatures.

187. Let us call to mind what subjects will do for the love and for the honour of their prince; to what strenuous services they subject themselves in time of peace; to what fatigues in war, to what risks and dangers of death. For their monarch they forsake country, kindred, friends, whatever is most dear; they brave fire, the sword, wounds, and death. Shame then upon us who, while others do so much for earthly kings, fear to do for the King of Heaven, Who is beyond compare far more deserving, that which so many do for an earthly monarch. "Let us blush," says St Lawrence Justinian, "that we, the friends of God, suffer ourselves to be

surpassed by the lovers of this world, who so often risk their bodily lives in the service of their sovereign, and what is worse, even at times imperil their souls' eternal welfare."* *The Queen of the South*, says our Lord, *shall rise up in judgment against this generation.* "And I," continues the Saint, "say that worldings will rise up in judgment against the servants of God, and will show them, by their own example, how deserving they are of rebuke and chastisement, seeing that they have been more lukewarm and slack in God's service than worldlings are in the love and service of the powers of earth."

188. How shall we ever be able to excuse our lukewarmness, since the appreciative love which we are now treating of is not beyond the powers imparted to us by the grace of God; since nothing but the light of faith is required for us to discern the infinite lovableness of God (which no one disputes); to have the good-will to hold God in esteem; and to give to Him in our hearts that preference which, as faith dictates, we know to be His just due? You may plead a hard disposition which cannot soften at the consideration of the amiability of God, a heart of steel which cannot melt into tenderness; you may say that your soul is incapable of certain loving transports, being unworthy of the special grace that enkindles them. But can you say that you are unable, with that help of God which never fails, to forego certain needless gratifications, to cross your will, to conquer your passions, to overcome the repugnances of sense, to make little account of your body, and even of your very life? Assuredly not. Hence you are without valid excuse if you fail in that perfection of appreciative love, which is of such priceless value in charity. Wherefore do not, for the future, content yourself with abstaining, for the sake of God, merely from certain grievous sins, repugnant no less to the dictates of reason than to the teachings of faith, but keep yourself free also from certain lesser faults that offend His most pure eyes. Let it not suffice for you that you do not

* Pudeat nos, ab amatoribus hujus sæculi, superari, qui ut sua vota perficiant, suisque superioribus famulentur, exponunt læto animo corpus periculis, et animam perditioni. Nempe consurgent tales nobiscum in judicio, et merito condemnabunt nos. De Obedient, cap. 9.

offend God, but strive to please Him by doing not simply what is commanded, but also what is of supererogation and only of counsel. In a word, cherish so high an esteem for this uncreated and most perfect Being as to prefer, by a generous victory over self-love, His will, His good pleasure to all else. This is perfect appreciative love. If you reach thus far, you may be sure of possessing a very eminent degree of charity, though your heart may remain as hard as a grindstone.

CHAPTER VI.

EXPLANATION OF THE LOVE OF BENEVOLENCE FOR GOD.

189. FRIENDLY love not only rejoices in the good wherewith it sees the beloved enriched, but desires for him that of which it sees him deprived. Thus, a mother rejoices at the good parts she discovers in her son, and wishes for him all wherein she sees him wanting. If her son be in need, she will wish to see him duly provided for,—if sick, she will yearn to see him recover,—if he be leading an abandoned life, she will have nothing so much at heart as his return to a well-regulated course of conduct.

190. In like manner, a soul that loves God, and takes delight in His infinite perfections as if they were its own, wishes Him all the good that is wanting to Him. Now, as God possesses in His own essence all possible good, nothing but what is external to Him can be wanting to Him, and this consists in the glory accruing to Him from the homage and service of His creatures, which this loving soul will ardently desire to procure for Him. Such a one will, in the first place, desire this glory of God, and offer it to Him in the affections of his own heart, at times giving God the highest praise, at other times humbling himself in the abyss of his own nothingness, in order to exalt God to the glory of being all; sometimes by uniting in the praise received by God from the angelic host, and the homage paid to Him by His saints on earth; or else by offering God the infinite glory He has had in

Himself from all eternity, and ever will have in eternal ages to come; or again, by calling on all creation, rational and irrational, even on inanimate objects, to extol God's grandeur; or, finally, by sighing after our heavenly country, not so much for the enjoyment thereof, as to be able to magnify throughout eternity the greatness of God; and by the like acts of an ingenious and inventive love.

191. Secondly, the person that loves God desires His glory with an effectual desire, and hence strives to find opportunities of forwarding this glory amongst his neighbours, by exhorting them to devotion, to piety, to the service of God, to the keeping of the commandments, to the practice of Christian virtues, encouraging all to a good life, both by familiar discourse in private, or by public exhortation; by edifying example and good advice, by loving admonition; by the administration of the Sacraments: in a word, by such methods as he may believe profitable to his neighbours, and conducive to the love and glory of God, which it is his object to promote.

192. "Nor should you think," says St Augustine, treating of this point, "that it belongs only to bishops and pastors, and to the clergy in general to procure the glory of God by the salvation of our neighbour. It likewise concerns you who are living in the world, to further God's honour, by stimulating your household to well-doing, by living blamelessly among them, by giving alms, by insinuating good sentiments, by preaching in a manner suitable to your calling. It is the duty of fathers of families," continues the Saint, "to preach to their households by admonition, teaching, exhortation, reproof; by the practice of a parental kindness towards their domestics; by maintaining a fixed order in the house. Hence," he concludes, "each and every one can, in a certain way, fulfil the episcopal charge by winning souls to Christ; parents in their own houses, artisans in their shops, merchants in their stores, women in their chambers, in church, in the streets; and all may give glory to God, each one by helping his neighbour in the manner suited to his own condition"*

* Dum auditis, fratres, Dominum dicentem: *Ubi ego sum, illic et minister meus erit:* nolite tantummodo bonos episcopos, et clericos cogitare. Etiam vos

193. John di Novella, Theologian in the venerable Dominican Order, gave proof of an extraordinary desire to further God's glory, cost what it might.* He was confined to bed by a severe access of gout, when a most famous professor of medicine, who had travelled from the furthermost parts of France, came to visit him; who, seeing how grievous was the severity of the attack, assured the invalid that he felt encouraged to attempt a radical cure of the illness, though the case had been despaired of by most eminent physicians of the time. He added, that he undertook the cure without charge, as he intended to heal the patient at his own expense. The sick man asked what time would be required for the remedies to take effect. The physician replied that it would take four entire months. At these words, the saintly Friar said, "I am most grateful to you, dear Doctor, for the charity you have shown on my behalf, but, to be plain with you, I could not bear to spend, I will not say months, but even a week, without gaining souls to God." But still more heroic was the zeal for God's honour shown by the same Religious at the hour of his death. When he was near his agony, a poor tramp, all in rags, called at the monastery gate, and asked to go to Confession to him. He was told by the porter that the Father was not in a state to hear him. I cannot tell how the good Religious got wind of this, but, although nearing the last moments of his life, he gave orders that the vagrant should be brought up to his cell, and sending away the bystanders, heard his Confession and, with his fast failing breath, pronouncing the words of absolution, shortly after expired in peace. This man truly loved our Lord with a love of Benevolence, since, in view of God's glory, he made no account of health, nor even of his own life. We may not indeed be able to do as much, but we may surely, for objects which

pro modulo vestro ministrate Christo, bene vivendo, eleemosynas faciendo, nomen, doctrinamque ejus quibus potestis prædicando, ut unusquisque etiam paterfamilias hoc nomine agnoscat paternum affectum suæ familiæ se debere. Pro Christo, et pro vitâ æternâ suos omnes admoneat, doceat, hortetur, impendat benevolentiam, exerceat disciplinam; ita in domo suâ ecclesiasticum et quodammodo episcopale, implebit officium, ministrans Christo, ut in æternum sit cum ipso. Tract. lj. in Joan.

* Thom. Cantip., Ex Lib. Apum, 1. 6, 2, cap. 31.

interest God's honour, brave some fatigue, undergo some inconvenience, or at the very least show some care about it, if we truly love our God.

194. From this love of Benevolence, as from its root, springs another kind of love, which is called Zeal. For, as St Thomas teaches, "Zeal is the product of an intense and vehement love, whereby we wish well to our friend, and hence are stirred up to remove by force whatever is a hindrance to his good." * Whence, the Angelic Doctor infers, that zeal for God takes its rise in an ardent love, whereby being earnest for the interests of God, we strive to repel, to do away with, to prevent, what may be contrary to the honour and good pleasure of the Almighty.†

195. The Psalmist, inflamed with this zeal, exclaims: *The zeal of Thy house has eaten me up, and the reproach of them that cast reproach on Thee has fallen upon me.*‡ And in another Psalm: *My zeal has made me pine away, because Thine enemies forgot Thy words: I beheld the transgressors, and I pined away.*§ St Augustine, commenting on these words of the Psalmist, explains this effect of zeal by saying that he, who, according to the expression of the Prophet, wastes away at beholding wicked things and deeds repugnant to God's honour, is he who strives to amend them, seeks to correct them, spares no pains to uproot them; but, seeing that his efforts are useless, reluctantly puts up with the evil, and mourns over it.‖ With such a holy zeal as this the Saint would have every Christian consumed; for, being a member of Christ,

* Amor amicitiæ quærit bonum amici: unde cum est intensus, facit hominem moveri contra omne illud quod repugnat bono amici; et secundum hoc dicitur aliquis zelare pro amico, quando quæ dicuntur vel fiunt contra bonum amici, aliquis repellere studet. 1, 2, quæst. 28, art. 4.

† Et per hunc etiam modum aliquis dicitur zelare pro Deo, quando ea quæ sunt contra honorem et voluntatem Dei, repellere secundum posse conatur.

‡ Zelus domus tuæ comedit me. Psal. lxviij. 29.

§ Tabescere me fecit zelus meus, quia obliti sunt verba tua inimici mei. . . . Vidi prævaricantes, et tabescebam. Psal. cxviij. 139, 158.

‖ Frater, unusquisque Christianus in membris Christi zelo domûs Dei comedatur. Quis comeditur zelo domûs Dei? Qui omnia quæ videt forte perversa satagit emendare, cupit corrigere, nec quiescit. Si emendare non potest, tolerat, gemit.

the Christian should be touched to the quick by any injury or slight put upon the honour of his Master.*

196. St John Chrysostom observes that the Apostle says that on beholding the falls of others he feels not alone grieved, but that his very bowels are on fire;† words expressive of the intense sorrow that inwardly consumed him.‡ And it is to be noted that this great displeasure and intense suffering, caused by the loss of souls and the offences committed against God, were no passing feelings in the heart of Paul, but were constant, and continually consuming him, as the Apostle himself bears witness in his Epistle to the Romans, and as St Chrysostom also remarks.§

197. How many apostolic men, burning with this zeal to prevent offences against God, have undertaken, and do still undertake, daily and incredible labours!—foregoing their ease, risking their honour and life, and courageously exposing themselves to journeyings, mishaps, persecutions, contradictions, slanders, nay, death itself; fearing nothing if only the honour of their well-beloved God be not outraged. All they who have made some progress in the school of divine love should burn with the like zeal, striving to prevent as well as they can, in the state to which they are called, the injuries done to their God; for it is impossible to love a friend dearly, and not to feel the affronts put upon his honour.

198. What is most to be wondered at in this point is, that though the love of God draws us to quiet and solitude, to retired and lonely places, where it finds all its food and aliment, if it be-

* Unusquisque Christianus in membris Christi zelo domus Dei comedatur. Tract. x. in Joan.

† Quis infirmatur, et ego non infirmor? Quis scandalizatur, et ego non uror. II. ad Cor. xj. 29.

‡ *Quis* enim, ait, *infirmatur, et ego non infirmor? Quis scandalizatur, et ego non uror?* Non dixit tristor; sed uror, intolerabilem, et incredibilem dolorem per incendium enunciare volens. Serm. de Cohabitatione Fœminæ regularis cum Viris.

§ Beatus Paulus exemplo magistri sui non cessavit per omnem vitam suam eos, qui exciderant, et qui in ruinâ suâ manserant, et resurgere postea nolebant, deplorare tam amare, ut hâc validâ determinatione significaret, et scriberet Romanis dicens: *Tristitia mihi est magna, et continuus dolor cordi meo pro fratribus meis, qui sunt mihi cognati secundum carnem.* Eodem Serm.

hold that its Beloved One is offended, it can no longer contain itself in its retirement, but goes forth from solitude, forsakes the desert, enters into cities and, like a fire which spreading in a dwelling, for a while has crept from story to story, at length bursts forth victorious, rising aloft, and extending on all sides; so love comes forth to sight, mingles with the crowd, and spreads its flames everywhere, in order to prevent the dishonour done to the object of its devotion. Theodoret relates that, under the Arian Emperor Constans, the great Antony came forth from his desert, appeared in the city, and going into the streets, churches, and houses, warned every one to close his ears against the Arians, who were gainsayers of the Catholic faith; exhorting all to hearken to Athanasius, the trusty standard-bearer of the Gospel truth. The historian then adds, that these godly men knew full well what suited the circumstances of the time, when it was right to savour the delights of holy love in the repose of solitude, and when to mingle in the tumult of cities, in order to further the interests of divine charity.

199. The same Theodoret further relates that a holy Solitary, Aphrantes by name, came to Antioch, during the reign of Valens, another Arian emperor, to vindicate the divine honour trodden under foot by these heretics; and that on being rebuked by the emperor for being away from his cell and forsaking his solitude, where his profession required him to abide in constant application to holy prayer, he made this answer to the monarch: "Full well do I know, Emperor, that all this is little in keeping with my calling, and as long as the lambs of Christ were unmolested in the pastures of Holy Church, I acted as you say. But now that ravening wolves are prowling around the flock of God, and are poisoning the pastures with the venom of the errors which their foul tongues spread abroad, I am here in order to stay such fearful havoc. Suppose me, Emperor, to be a dutiful son of a kind father, retired within my chamber, wholly occupied in my usual daily labour, and that I see my father's home take fire, what is it

* Itaque non ignorabant illi sancti viri, quæ res cuique tempori esset accommodata, et quando solitudinis otium esset amplectendum, quando rursus urbana negotia quieti solitariæ præferenda. Hist. Eccl., cap. 25.

my duty to do? Am I, think you, to remain hidden in my retreat, and not rather hasten out of my chamber, run to the threatened spot, fetch water, lend a helping hand, and strive to prevent the ruin that is imminent? This is precisely our case. Thou, Emperor, hast set fire to the house of God, our most loving Father, and we are hastening on all sides to quench the fatal conflagration."* At these words the emperor was confounded and silenced. We are quite safe in saying that certain persons devoid of zeal, who place the whole essence of their love in enjoying God in the repose of their contemplations, and who are callous to the fact that God is being offended, nor strive to remedy, by the means befitting their calling, the many outrages done to His honour, are hereby convicted of loving themselves rather than God.

200. But it should be remembered that genuine zeal for God's honour, though fervent and effectual, is not impetuous, restless, or indiscreet, but blends mildness, foresight, and circumspection, together with the vigour and efficacy of its ardour; for after all it is the offspring of the tender bowels of charity, which is wholly meek and orderly in its workings. Hence St Paul rebukes such as have the *zeal of God, but not according to knowledge;* in other words, not accompanied with due moderation and rectitude.† And St Bernard says, that zeal without knowledge, that is, without discretion, is of little use, and more commonly is even dangerous, while, worse still, it becomes at times insupportable. Wherefore, he observes, the more our zeal is fervent, the more carefully should it be regulated by charity and discretion. ‡

201. St John Chrysostom presents to us a singular instance of

* Atque hoc ipsum nos agimus, O imperator. Etenim cum tu jam in patris nostri ædes flammam injeceris, nos circumcursitamus, quo eam mature possimus extinguere. Hist. Eccl., cap. 34.

† Testimonium autem perhibeo illis, quod æmulationem Dei habent, sed non secundum scientiam. Ad Rom. xx. 2.

‡ Importabilis absque scientiâ est zelus. Ubi ergo vehemens æmulatio, ibi maxime discretio est necessaria, quæ est ordinatio caritatis. Semper enim zelus absque scientiâ minus efficax minusque utilis invenitur, plerumque autem et perniciosus valde sentitur. Quo igitur zelus fervidior, ac vehementior spiritus, profusiorque caritas, eo vigilantiori opus scientiâ est, quæ zelum supprimat, spiritum temperet, ordinet caritatem. In Cant. Serm. 49.

a zeal no less efficacious than discreet in a noble youth of his acquaintance, who having fallen several times, was as often brought back to God by the discreet zeal of others.* Born of illustrious parentage, brought up amid the splendours of riches, and attended by crowds of slaves, he resolved to trample under foot the pomp of the world, and to devote himself to God in solitude. Wherefore, laying aside his rich vesture, he clad himself in a coarse garb, and repaired to the summit of a high mountain, in order to lead the life of a hermit, far from the din and tumult of cities. He soon reached a perfection far beyond his tender years, and which might justly be admired in any one eminent for great holiness; as the holy Doctor bears witness. †

202. But, alas! how frail is the virtue of the young! How little is their constancy to be relied upon! Who would ever have thought it? A young man thus advanced in virtue allowed himself to be led astray by friends who had come to visit him in his solitude. He left his mountain-top, returned to the city, gave himself to worldly pomps, and cast himself into the arms of vanity far more thoroughly than heretofore. He rode through the public streets richly apparelled, mounted on a blood horse, followed by a great train of servants; more than ever given to pleasure, luxury, amours, and debauchery. It is impossible to describe the grief certain holy monks felt at this woful fall from heaven into the bottomless pit. Inflamed with a holy zeal, they determined to win him back to God. But what, think you, were the means they made use of in order to compass their design? Did they go and address him with sharp rebukes and bitter reproaches? Did they, in order to rouse him from his deadly torpor, throw in his teeth his excesses, his fickleness towards God, his faithlessness in God's service? Nothing of the kind. They began by courteously saluting and embracing him whenever they met him in the public squares, and they mingled with the train of servants that accompanied his progress through the streets. At first he hardly deigned to cast a glance upon them from the

* In Parænesi Priore ad Theodorum Lapsum.

† Non juxta illius ætatis modum; sed qualem posset vir quispiam admirabilis, et excellens.

horse on which he was mounted, and replied to them with scorn. But being gradually softened by so much courtesy and kindness, he began to return their greetings with civility, to regard them with a friendly eye, to reason with them, then to lend a willing ear to their discourse, to blush for himself, to feel compunction, and to acknowledge the sad plight of his soul. Lastly, being fully converted, he determined to resume his former life. And as on reflection he had discovered that the occasion of his inconstancy was in his large possessions, he distributed them all to the poor with heroic generosity, returned to the desert in the company of a holy Solitary, who was greatly experienced in the eremitical life, and devoted himself entirely to mortification, prayer, and austerities.

203. Alas for the fickleness of human nature! After a while the heedless youth grew lukewarm, and to this state succeeded a fatal coldness; for having fallen in with a vicious woman, he was betrayed into a grievous sin. After so shameful a fall, having lost all relish for spiritual food, he asked his companion to get him some flesh meat, as he was tired of abstinence. His comrade, fearing greater evils, agreed to his request. But becoming more and more blinded, the youth said plainly that he wanted to go back to the town. The servant of God being unable, in spite of every endeavour, to retain him, followed unperceived, with the intention of being at hand to assist the youth in the depths of his ruin. On arriving in town, he saw the young man rush into a brothel, for the purpose of abandoning himself to countless acts of shame. The grief of the good Solitary at seeing the loss of his companion was on a par with his zeal for his recovery, as the reader may well imagine. He waited until his friend came out of the place of infamy; and, without betraying any emotion, went to meet him with a cheerful countenance, clasped him to his breast, covered him with kisses and, without any allusion to his transgressions, attached himself to his company and, by friendly converse, gradually so wrought upon him, as to bring him back to their solitude. On his arrival, the young man, in his compunction, had himself shut up in a cell, the door of which was walled in, and there, as the holy Doctor relates, he persevered his whole life

long in fasting, prayer, and tears, cleansing his soul from the filth of his excesses.* And to such a pitch of holiness did he arrive, that the country around being afflicted by a long and excessive drought, God told one of His servants that recourse should be had to the prayers of this saintly Recluse. This was done, and at his intercession the scourge was immediately withdrawn. St John Chrysostom could not have presented to us a more attractive example of zeal fervent in the heart, efficacious in act, discreet in method.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SORROWING LOVE OF CONTRITION.

204. A MAN who loves God, and takes delight in the infinite perfection wherewith He is endowed, who desires for Him the external good in which He is seen wanting, who sets Him above self-gratification, interest, honour, nay, life itself, cannot but feel greatly grieved and pierced to the heart with sorrow, at the thought that whims and caprices have many a time been preferred to God; with sorrow which, though painful, yet is sweet and tender, because the grief is accompanied with trust in God. The soul remains transfixed with this sorrow, the iron sword always pierces it through and through, always compels it to weep and to mourn. Thus holy David confesses of himself that he ever kept his sins before his mind's eye: "*For I know my iniquity, and my sin is ever before me.* As a thorn it is ever pricking my heart."† Thus, too, Ezechias was ever repeating, "I will reflect on all my past years, and in the bitterness of my soul detest all my sins."‡

205. St Thomas, speaking of interior repentance of heart,

* Perseveravit per omnem vitam in jejuniis, in precationibus, in lacrymis, repurgans animam a sorde peccati.

† Iniquitatem meam ego cognosco, et peccatum meum contra me est semper. Psal. iv. 5.

‡ Recogitabo omnes annos meos, in amaritudine animæ meæ. Isa. xlviij. 15.

which is none other than the sorrowing love which we are now considering, says that it should cease only with life, because one who loves should ever grieve at having offended the object of his love.* St Augustine is of the like opinion, saying that "we should always do penance as long as we abide in this mortal flesh."† He moreover adds, that if one had never defiled his conscience with mortal sin, still he should daily do penance, on account of the dust of venial faults which is ever accumulating on the soul that lives in this wretched exile.‡ And his reason is, that although these slight faults do not inflict a fatal wound on the soul (as is the case with grievous sin), yet, taken together, they form an eruption and a leprosy that mar the beauty of the soul, and debar it from the chaste and delightful embraces of the Heavenly Bridegroom, unless they be healed by the remedy of daily penance.§

206. Wherefore, the Seraph of Mount Carmel, St Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, was wont to say, that the love of Contrition, this sorrowing love, is more suited to the present life; while the rejoicing love of Complacency is fitter for that which is to come: for it is meet that those who have reached the term should love God in gladness, while we, who as yet are far from our heavenly country, more fittingly love Him with mourning, with tears and contrition. St Jerome relates of St Paula, that she had made her eyes two fountains of tears, wherewith, day and night, she

* Interior pœnitentia est, quâ quis dolet de peccato commisso. Et talis pœnitentia debet durare usque ad finem vitæ: semper enim debet homini displicere quod peccavit. Part. 3, quæst. 84, art. 8.

† Altera pœnitentia est, cujus actio per totam istam vitam, quâ in carne mortali degimus, perpetuâ supplicationis humilitate subeunda est. Lib. 1., Hom. ult., cap. 2.

‡ Sed etiam propter pulverem hujus mundi.... quotidianam debemus habere pœnitentiam.

§ Piget cuncta colligere, quæ quisque in seipso certius comprehendit atque reprehendit, si divinarum scripturarum speculum non negligenter attendat. Quæ quamvis singula non lethali vulnere ferire sentiantur, sicut homicidium, adulterium et cetera hujusmodi; tamen omnia simul congregata, velut scabies, quo plura sunt, necant, et nostrum decus ita exterminant, ut ab illius sponsi speciosi præ filiis hominum castissimis amplexibus separent, nisi medicamento quotidianæ pœnitentiæ defæcentur. Eodem loco.

wept over her faults, and, after the example of holy David, watered her couch with her tears. He adds, that she wept so bitterly over trivial failings, that any one would have considered her guilty of grievous excesses. The holy Doctor used to exhort the virgin to give herself peace, and to restrain the floods of tears which were continually streaming from her eyes. But she answered, that she needed to wash away, with her weeping, the paint wherewith she had adorned her cheeks; that it behoved her to afflict the flesh she had indulged with luxuries, and to punish herself for her immoderate laughter in days gone by.*

207. What St Paula was accustomed to do is precisely the practice that St John Chrysostom recommends to devout persons, to cleanse, that is, their souls by continual sorrow and unceasing tears, from the defilement of sin; never to interrupt this holy mourning, so as to become more and more pure in themselves, and more and more pleasing in God's sight. "For," he writes, "as the face by frequent washing is cleansed from dirt, so by frequently laving the soul in tears of compunction, we cleanse it from the stains it has contracted, and which, through frailty, are always accumulating upon it." † To this does holy David allude when he says, "Wash me yet more thoroughly, O Lord."‡ He entertained a steadfast hope of having been cleansed already by the tears of his bitter repentance, yet not content with this, he

* Mollia etiam in gravissimâ febri lectuli strata non habuit; sed super durissimum humum stratis ciliciolis quiescebat. Si tamen illa quies dicenda est, quâ jugibus pene orationibus dies noctesque jungebat, illud implens de psalterio: *Lavabo per singulas noctes lectum meum, lachrymis meis stratum meum rigabo:* in quâ fontes crederes lacrymarum. Ita levia peccata plangebat, ut illam gravissimorum criminum crederes ream. Cumque a nobis crebrius moneretur ut parceret lacrymis, aiebat: Turpanda est facies, quam contra Dei præceptum purpurissâ, cerussâ, et stibio sæpe depinxi; affligendum est corpus quod multis vacavit deliciis; longus risus perpeti compensandus est fletu. In Vitâ S. Paulæ, ad Eustoch.

† Si animam ornare vis, sicut corpus soles, appone adjutorium, quod ex precibus est, et peccatorum confessione, et continuis lacrymis faciem tuam lavare ne cesses. Nam sicut faciem corporis tui quotidie abluis, ne quâ forte maculâ faciei inhærens fœda appareat; sic et animæ curam habe, lacrymis eam abluens calidis. Hâc enim aquâ maculæ deponuntur. In Genes. Hom. 21.

‡ Amplius lava me, Domine.

continued to weep, in order, by continual tears and unceasing contrition, to attain a more thorough purification.

208. The reader must hearken to what St Vincent Ferrer relates* as having happened to another preacher, though in truth it happened to himself; he will see hereby the great efficacy of the sorrowing Love of pure Contrition for cleansing the soul from all defilement of sin, not only with reference to its guilt, but also as regards its liability to punishment. A public courtesan had come to one of his sermons, decked out in all her finery, not indeed to hear the Word of God, but to lure her blind lovers by her wanton glances. While the Saint was thundering from the pulpit with that energy so proper to his apostolic zeal, the guilty woman began gradually to feel compunction, to sigh, and then to burst into tears. Soon she fainted with grief, and at last died of a broken heart. A death so sudden in a woman of scandalous life moved the bystanders to great pity, and occasioned a murmur of sorrow amongst all the audience. The saintly preacher quieted them by saying that they should take heart, since the woman had died of the vehemence of her contrition. But they were still more reassured when they heard a voice from on high confirming the assertion of the preacher, saying: "Pray not for her, but recommend yourselves to her, for she is gone up to heaven." Now, I will observe on this occurrence, that if a vehement contrition was able to purify a soul so deformed and so unclean, restoring its baptismal innocence, without leaving the shadow of a stain or any liability to punishment, how much greater will be the power of this contrition to beget a perfect purity in persons possessed of sanctifying grace, in whom habitual charity reigns, if only they frequently practise it, and apply it to themselves by an exercise of sorrowing love?

209. However, not even this should suffice for a soul that ardently loves God. A bride, who tenderly loves her husband, grieves not only at the displeasure she herself may have caused him, but also at the offences committed against him by any one else. Thus, too, one who loves God feels hurt, not only at his own sins, but at those of others, and mourns over them, seeing

* In Fer. 6, post Dom. i. Quadr. Tr. 9.

that they too are offences against his beloved Lord. Such was the loving sorrow of St Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, of whom Holy Church tells us that she wept bitterly for the crimes of sinners and unbelievers, and offered to undergo every kind of torture for their salvation.* Thus, too, St Teresa, of whom the Church likewise bears witness that she shed continual tears over the darkness of unbelievers and heretics, and that, in order to appease the divine wrath, she offered to God, for their salvation, the penances which she voluntarily inflicted upon her own innocent flesh.† This has been, and still is, the daily practice of souls that truly love God, and we must do likewise, if a single spark of the love of Almighty God burns within our breasts.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE.

210. First suggestion. In order not to go astray in determining the degree of charity attained by his penitent, the Director must distinguish between what is substantial and merely accidental in this theological virtue. Otherwise, he may easily find himself in the same predicament as some other teachers of the spiritual life, who have come to look upon persons as having reached the furthest boundary of divine charity when they have scarce put their feet within its sacred precincts. The Confessor must therefore remember that charity is a habit infused by God into the soul, together with sanctifying grace; if, indeed,—as I have before remarked on several previous occasions,—it be not one and same thing with sanctifying grace. Now the act of

* Infidelium, et peccatorum perditionem amare deflens, se ad quælibet pro illorum salute tormenta paratam offerebat. In Festo 25 Maii.

† Infidelium, et hæreticorum tenebras perpetuis deflebat lacrymis, atque ad placandum divinæ ultionis iram, voluntarios proprii corporis cruciatus Deo pro eorum salute offerebat. In Festo 15 Octobris.

charity is a love of God, produced by the will endowed with this habit, as also by the concurrence of certain supernatural aids, by which God raises the mind and strengthens the heart to love. Whence it follows, that of itself the act of charity is not perceivable by the senses, for, being the product of a spiritual agency, it is itself spiritual like the parent that begets it. True, this spiritual act frequently makes an impression on the inferior part of the soul, which is the seat of the sensual appetite, and then it makes us feel a certain tender, sweet, and most pleasing affection which, if it increase in intensity, passes on to inflamed emotions, fervour and impulsive movements; or even breaks out into sighs, groans, and tears.

211. This being presupposed, we must know that divine charity, in so far as it is a virtue, consists in the infused habit which is not of itself perceptible to sense, inasmuch as an act of love consists in a motion of the will towards God. The tenderness, the sweetness, the inflamed sentiments, the tears which follow upon this spiritual act of the will, are merely accidents of charity, failing which, its substance remains unimpaired. It must further be borne in mind, that these sensible emotions of love are, at times, rather an effect of nature than the work of grace. A person of soft and sanguine character is easily moved to a tender affection for a pleasing object. So that, if he love God, although only languidly as regards the will, he will easily feel softened and inflamed at heart, or even melt into tears. On the contrary, a man of strong and austere temperament, although he be an intense lover of God and prefer Him to all created good, being ready to do great things for Him, will be incapable of breaking out into tender affections and of feeling that sweetness wherewith another less advanced in charity will melt. It may be added, that we can conceive a person loving God very tenderly and sweetly, and yet being wholly wanting in charity. To give a proof of this: When a man is in the state of grace, and endowed with the habit of charity, there is engendered, by frequent acts of sensible and supernatural love, in his sensitive appetite a certain habit and facility of renewing the like tender and sweet affections; which habit is not infused, but

acquired by practice, and hence is natural rather than supernatural in its essence. Should such a one fall into mortal sin, is is unquestionable that he has grace and charity. In this case, if he think of God through the natural knowledge which he possesses—for nature itself presents God to our minds as the All-perfect Being—the appetite, by means of the habit acquired, may easily break out into sensible and delectable affections of love, which are most assuredly not acts of charity, nor meritorious in the absence of any supernatural principle by which they may be produced. Hence the Director will perceive how wofully those Confessors are misled, who, in taking the measure of the charity of their penitents, adopt as standards certain tender emotions, ardent feelings, and melting moods; since it is not seldom the case that he who shows most of this sensibility has least of charity, and he who has less of the appearance, has more of the solid substance, of the virtue.

212. But before going further, the Director must understand that in laying down this doctrine, it is far from our intention to speak slightingly of this sensible love and devotion to God, and still less to condemn it with the wicked Molinos, who dares to style it a filthy and abominable feeling; a conclusion at which a certain scrupulous critic has arrived, from chancing to read some instructions such as I have been giving. Every sane man must perforce acknowledge that the sensible love of God is pure and virtuous, that it is a gift by which God attracts souls to Himself, *draws them after Him in the savoury perfume of His ointment,* detaches them from the empty delights of the world; knowing as the Almighty does, that we are not pure intelligences, but made up of senses that require at times their aliment; the which if we employ them aright, as the saints have taught us by their examples, cannot but serve for our advantage. But what is meant is, that Directors should not make so much account of the sensible emotions as to mistake them for the measure and standard of charity, else they will fall into grievous delusion, both because these do not constitute the sap and marrow of charity, but merely the outward bark of the virtue—in other words, are merely accidental to it—and also because it often happens that

nature has a large share in them, they being indeed at times the product of nature alone. We must, then, warn our penitents neither to hold internally nor show externally any great esteem of these sensible affections, lest they become attached to them; for though such sensible feelings be holy, and of themselves of great help, yet on account of the misuse to which they are put by such as receive them with attachment, they become hurtful, and are thus a great hindrance to progress in perfection.

213. The rule, therefore, which the Director must observe, in order duly to estimate the charity of his penitents, must be not their tender-heartedness, but their vigour of will; not the softness of their affections, but the energy of their action; as the Apostle St John warns us,* who has left us a symbol of this in that Angel of the Apocalypse, who measured the heavenly Jerusalem, not with a frail reed cut in the fields, but with a rod of gold, made, that is, of a strong and solid metal, able to withstand the fire and to be perfected and refined by its agency.† Now, what is the golden rod the Director should ever keep in his hand to measure the progress made by his penitents in charity and perfection? This will be shown in the following paragraphs.

214. Second suggestion. The true measure of charity is not to feel much, but to do and suffer much for God. These are the two golden rods which will never deceive in their measurements. Hear how clearly St Teresa, that great mistress of the spiritual life, lays this down. "If you ask me how this love is to be acquired, I answer, by resolving to work and suffer for God, and to do this effectually, when occasion presents itself."‡ As regards working for God, the Director will ever bear in mind those words of St Gregory: "The love of God cannot stand idle: if it be real, it does great things, if it refuse to work, it is not true love."§ And the reason is obvious: Jesus Christ calls

* Non diligamus verbo, neque linguâ; sed opere et veritate. I. Joan iii. 18.

† Et mensus est civitatem de arundine aureâ per stadia duodecim millia. Apoc. xxj. 16.

‡ Foundations. Chap. 10.

§ Numquam est Dei amor otiosus; operatur enim magna, si est; si vero renuit operari, amor non est. Homil. 50, in Evangel.

love a fire which He came to spread abroad on earth,† and which as such must imitate the properties of fire. Of all the elements, fire is the most active, efficacious, and powerful. Set before it as much fuel as you list, it burns and consumes everything. It reduces to powder the flintiest rocks, softens the hardest iron, melts the most solid metals. If it seize on a building, it extends its flames, rises aloft, spreads everywhere, rages in its fury, devours woods, forests, palaces, towns, and whatever comes across its path. It is never tired, never rests, is never satiated. Thus too, when divine love lays hold of any one, it suffers him not to live in idleness and neglect; it is ever urging him on to do great things, both in his own soul and that of his neighbour, in the service of his beloved Lord. It is ever repeating within itself those words of Rachel to her husband, Jacob: "*Give me children or else I die.* Give me fruits of love, give me labour, struggle, discomfort; give me souls, give me fatigues, such as may be pleasing to my Beloved."*

215. If, then, a spiritual person can manage to undertake great labours for the sake of God Almighty without feeling burdened, and can assume arduous tasks without being incommoded; and if, on the contrary, the very fatigue and inconvenience undergone for God become agreeable to him, love has in him reached a very perfect stage; for, as St Augustine says, "To him that loves, labour is not burdensome but pleasant. Thus do we see fishermen toiling in the waters, insensible to fatigue from their fondness for fishing; thus the hunter scours the plains and scales the heights, penetrates into woods and forests, without a sense of fatigue, from mere love of the chase. For labours undertaken in love are either not labours, or are labours loved."‡

216. Should, then, the Director find that his penitents are striving earnestly for perfection, that they spare no pains to assist their neighbour in ministering to his needs, whether bodily or

* Ignem veni mittere in terram: et quid volo, nisi ut accendatur?

† Da mihi liberos, alioquin moriar. Genes. xxx. 1.

‡ Nullo modo sunt onerosi labores amantium: sed etiam ipsi delectant, sicut venantium, aucupantium, piscantium. Nam in eo quod amatur, aut non laboratur, aut ipse labor amatur. De Bono Viduit., cap. 21.

spiritual, without being deterred by trouble, inconvenience, toil, hard labour or expense, and that they act thus not out of motives of vanity or self-interest, but for the love of God, he may rest assured that true charity reigns in their hearts. But if, on the contrary, a woman frequently comes to him who is not willing to take trouble, cares little to do service to those of her household and to lighten the labours of her companions; if all she does is to spend many hours in church reciting vocal prayers: of such a one may he say with St John, that she loves in word only, not in deed, and in truth.* If a penitent, whether layman or cleric, strives not to mortify his passions, nor is ready to inconvenience himself somewhat to give assistance to his neighbours, but merely ruminates over some devout affection in prayer, or contents himself with some sighs at the foot of the altar, he may safely be informed that he has no true love of God, no genuine charity. And the Confessor should impress upon such a person the maxims of St Augustine and St Gregory, the former of whom says that true love is to be tested by deeds, otherwise it is not genuine, but an empty counterfeit;† while the latter teaches that the true token of love is not a mere sentiment of the heart, but earnestness in well-doing.‡

217. The other golden rod, wherewith to measure divine charity in our penitents, is willingness to suffer for the object of their love. This is an infallible test, for where self-love has no inlet (as it surely has none in suffering), the love of God cannot but be the sole ingredient. "There is nothing," says St John Chrysostom, "that may not be overcome by love blended with desire of the beloved object. If God be this object, and our heart yearn after Him, love will avail to overcome every evil. To him that possesses it, neither fire, nor the sword, nor want, nor sickness, nor death, nor anything else, however frightful in itself, will appear to be grievous; rather, scorning all these, he soars by his affection heavenward, where the object of his love abides: there, after the

* Diligit linguâ, non opere et veritate.

† Opere est monstranda vera dilectio, ne sit infructuosa nominis appellatio. In Joan. Tract. 75.

‡ Signum amoris non est in affectione animæ, sed in studio bonæ operationis. In Lib. ii. Regum, cap. 4.

manner of the heavenly citizens, without casting a glance on the heavens, the earth, and the sea, he will be absorbed in the contemplation of the divine beauty, his love of which will hinder him from being dejected by the most formidable mishaps of this life, while he will not be puffed up by the height of prosperity and enjoyment."* St Augustine expresses the same sentiment with great terseness. "There is nothing," he writes, "that is so hard and stubborn as not to yield to the fire of love, wherewith if the soul be inflamed it is rapt in God, and is invincible to every torture or refinement of cruelty."†

218. If you ask me for some examples of this charity, dauntless, robust, and unconquered amid sufferings, I beg you to consider a Paul, at one time laden with heavy fetters in a dungeon, at another stoned by the people, scourged by tyrants, tracked everywhere by his persecutors who pant for his life-blood. Hear what he says of his trials: *I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our tribulations.*‡ Behold the Apostle St Andrew, who, at the sight of the Cross whereon he was to hang, exclaimed, "O good Cross, long since desired, anxiously yearned for, unceasingly sought, and at length prepared for my hankering heart; with peace and gladness do I come to clasp thee."§ Look at Marcus and Marcellinus cruelly nailed to a beam; hear their reply to one who showed pity for their sad plight: "Peace! we have never felt such delight at a banquet as we do now, when suffering

* Nihil est quod non superet amor cum desiderio. Cum autem Dei sit desiderium, omnium altissimum est: et neque ignis, neque ferrum, neque paupertas; non infirmitas, non mors, neque aliud quid hujusmodi grave videbitur talem amorem possidenti; sed omnia deridens, ad cœlum volabit, et illic morantibus nihilo se geret indignius; aliud intuens nihil, non cœlum, non terram, non mare; sed ad unam tantùm pulchritudinem intentus illius gloriæ: et neque eum præsentis vitæ tristia humiliabunt, nec inflare, et extollere suavia poterunt. Hom. 64 ad Popul.

† Nihil est tam durum et ferreum, quod non amoris igne vincatur: quo cum se anima rapit in Deum, super omnem carnificinam libera et admiranda volabit. In Joan. Tract. 48.

‡ Repletus sum consolatione, superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione nostra. II. ad Corinth. vii. 4.

§ O bona crux, diu desiderata, sollicite amata, sine intermissione quæsita, et aliquando cupienti animo præparata, securus et gaudens venio ad te. Breviar. Rom., in Festo S. Andr., 30 Novemb.

such frightful tortures for the sake of Jesus."* Or again, think of Secunda, who seeing her sister Rufina cruelly tormented by the tyrant, felt herself affronted because the barbarous wretch would have her to be a witness, rather than a companion, of her sister's martyrdom. "Wherefore," she exclaimed, "cruel man, dost thou do honour to my sister, and heap disgrace upon me? Order us both to be tormented together."† Call to mind St Teresa of Jesus, who would rather cease to live than cease to suffer, but yearned either for death or suffering, for the sake of her heavenly home.‡ Consider, finally, St Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, who wished to live only to suffer for her Beloved.§ This is the genuine charity which shrinks not from, nor yields to, the violence of suffering, but in the very furnace of trial becomes refined, being made purer and more brilliant.

219. If then the Director find that his penitent willingly, and for the sake of God, endures the sorrows and infirmities sent him from above; that he offers himself with a stout heart to put up with affronts, injuries, persecutions; that he bears patiently the loss of goods, of honour, of kinsfolk, of those nearest and dearest; that he loves mortification, embraces penance: there is indeed cause for rejoicing, because such a one abounds in charity. But if the penitent recoils with abhorrence from every affliction, trial and mortification, and makes the whole substance of his love consist in tender emotions; if he seeks to enjoy sensible consolations through his love, and is satisfied with himself, when he gets his fill of them, as if he were a very seraph; there will be room for sadness, since that penitent is but weak in charity: and he may be sure, that however ardent his affection may seem to be, his love for God is very languid; nay more, I would even say that in loving God, he loves himself still more than God, or in this very love he seeks his own gratification rather than God's good pleasure.

* Nunquam tam jucunde epulati sumus, quam cum hæc libenter Jesu Christi causâ perferimus. Ibid. 18 Jun., in Fest. SS. Marc. et Marcel.

† Quid est, quod sororem meam honore, me afficis ignominiâ? Jube ambas simul cædi. Ibid. 10 Jul. in Festo SS. Sec. et Rufin.

‡ Aut pati, aut mori. Ibid. 15 Octob. in Fest. S. Teres.

§ Non mori, sed pati.

220. There is yet another standard of divine love; but as it is the most infallible rule of all, and as it excludes every possibility of mistake, I shall devote to it the whole of the following Article.

ARTICLE IV.

On the Love of Conformity.

CHAPTER I.

THAT CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD IN EVERYTHING REQUIRED OF US, IS THE CHIEF ACT OF DIVINE CHARITY.

221. In every one of the acts of divine love described in the foregoing Article, we find Conformity of our Will with that of God comprised in the most perfect manner. How, then, should not this be the chief act of divine love, since it is contained in every other act thereof, and is by them perfected? And to say the real truth: how is it possible that a loving soul can take delight in God, without desiring to please Him by the union of its own will with that of the Almighty? How can it wish unto God the good it sees Him deprived of, without desiring at the same time the fulfilment of His will, the sole source of all the accidental good that is not already in the Godhead? Or how is it possible to prefer God to every created being, and not place the holy will of God, which is the same thing as God Himself, before all created objects? How can any one grieve for the offences done to God, unless he grieve for not having himself done God's will, since in this consists the dishonour and outrage committed against the Divine Majesty?

222. But what is of greater import, and what must be specially borne in mind, is that submission to the will of God works out more perfectly that which the other acts of charity perform; for it is

not confined to mere inward acts (as are the other acts of the love of God) but it efficaciously resolves upon outward acts also, and straightway proceeds to carry them into execution. The reason is obvious. The soul cannot fully submit to God's will unless it be in entire conformity with the divine will. But as God requires not only the affections of the heart, but efficacious deeds, it follows that both must be willed by all who would act up to the divine will. And, therefore, St Jerome has correctly remarked, that perfect charity, wherein the friendship of the soul with God consists, is tantamount after all to the conformity of our will with that of God.*

223. But, waiving argument, let us betake ourselves to the authority of the Sacred Scriptures, and to that of the Fathers, whose authority in matters appertaining to the spirit is confessedly of the weightiest. Certain it is that the first and main thing that God requires of us His creatures, is the fulfilment of His laws; and this not only because He most rigorously exacts it of us, but because He stirs us up to it by the prospect of reward, and the fear of chastisement. On the other hand, it is unquestionable that charity consists in the faithful observance of God's laws. In the Book of Ecclesiasticus we read, "*They that love God will keep His ways;* and in their journeyings during the miserable pilgrimage of this life they will not take a single step that is not regulated by the divine will."† And still more plainly does the author go on to say: "They that really love the Lord shall be filled with His laws;"‡ in other words, the thoughts of their minds shall turn upon nothing else, and the affections of their hearts shall know no other food than the fulfilment of God's law, being always heedful not to neglect a single jot or tittle thereof, lest they should contravene the most holy will of their Lord.

224. But now let us pass on to see what was in this matter the mind of the most loved and most loving disciple of our Redeemer; of that disciple who, resting on the sacred heart of Jesus, drew

* Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est. Epist. ad Demetr.

† Qui diligunt illum, conservabunt viam illius. Ecclus. ii. 18.

‡ Qui diligunt cum, replebuntur lege ipsius. Ibid. ii. 19.

thence, as from a furnace of love, the true doctrine of charity.* The beloved disciple could not express more unmistakably than he has done what we have been advancing. *This*, he writes, *is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.* He does not say that it consists in tender sentiments or in melting emotions, but in the full observance of the commands God has laid upon us. And here we may remark upon the expression, *keep His commandments.* He who has in his keeping a garment richly embroidered, is not content with merely keeping it out of the mud, with not tearing it into tatters, with not casting it into the fire, but, moreover, guards it with an especial care from the slightest stain. So too, he who has charity towards God, is not content with barely keeping the commandments and not breaking them into fragments by mortal sins; he keeps them carefully, and takes particular heed not to transgress them even by slight faults or trivial shortcomings. But as if these words did not sufficiently express what St John had in his mind, he explains his meaning by a most energetic expression, saying, *He who says that he knows God, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*† And he concludes with the assertion: *But he that keepeth His word, in him in very deed the charity of God is perfected.*‡

225. It assuredly cannot be questioned that the beloved disciple derived this sublime doctrine from the bosom and lips of his Divine Master, seeing that the teachings of both are in such perfect unison. *If you love Me*, says the Redeemer, *keep My commandments . . . He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me. . . . He that loves Me not, keeps not My words.*§ Was it possible for Jesus Christ to give us to understand more plainly, that love for Him consists not in mere sentiment, but in the perfect fulfilment of His most holy will, as signified to us by

* Hæc est caritas Dei, ut mandata ejus custodiamus. I Joan. v. 3.

† Qui dicit se nosse Deum, et mandata ejus non custodit, mendax est, et in hoc veritas non est. Ibid. ii. 4.

‡ Qui autem servat verbum ejus, vere in hoc caritas Dei perfecta est. Ibid. ii. 5.

§ Si diligitis me, mandata mea servate. Qui habet mandata mea, et servat ea, ille est qui diligit me. Qui non diligit me, sermones meos non servat. Joan. xiv. 15.

His divine commandments? Assuredly not, says St Gregory: ask any one whether he loves God, and he will not fail to answer that he does. But before taking his answer, warn him to reflect on those words of Christ, whereby He declares that whoever loves Him must obey the words by which He expresses His will. Tell him to look well into it, and to see whether, in order to submit to God's precept, he can refrain from pleasure, check anger, keep down pride, despise riches, trample honours under foot, forgive injuries, do good to them that have offended him; and much more that Christ with His own lips has required of us. If he fail to act thus, his will is in opposition with that of God, and he most certainly loves not his Maker. Rather does he give the lie to himself, since in word he declares that he loves what his deeds prove that he does not love.*

226. Wherefore, a spiritual person may wholly melt away in sweet sentiments of love; be steeped, as it were, in tears of gladness; burn with delightful ardours; and yet, if he omit to do deeds conformable to God's will, he stands convicted of want of Love. St Gregory says well: "Let then each one enter into himself, and prove whether he loves God in very deed. Yet he should not believe his heart, whatever be its answer, unless that answer is authenticated by the witness of his works. Let him therefore examine how his tongue speaks, what are the thoughts of his mind, how he keeps in check the affections of his heart, whether or not his life is in conformity with the Saviour's teaching. These alone are the unexceptionable witnesses to his love."†

227. What kind of love would a son show, who were to deny

* Ecce si unusquisque vestrum requiratur, an diligat Deum? totâ fiduciâ, et securâ mente respondet, Diligo: in ipso autem lectionis exordio audîstis, quid veritas dicit: Si quis diligit me, sermonem meum servabit. Probatio enim dilectionis exhibitio est operis. Vere enim diligimus, et mandata ejus custodimus, si nos a nostris voluptatibus coarctamus. Nam qui adhuc per illicita desideria diffluit, profecto Deum non amat: quia ei in suâ voluntate contradicit. In Evang. Hom. 30.

† Ad vosmetipsos ergo, fratres carissimi, introrsus redite; si Deum vere amatis, exquirite. Nec tamen sibi aliquis credat, quidquid sibi animus sine operis attestatione responderit. De dilectione conditoris lingua, mens, vita requirantur. Eodem loco.

obedience to his father's will? Or a subject who, refusing to keep his prince's commands, were to shake off the yoke of his allegiance? Or a soldier, were he to show restiveness when ordered to do something by his captain? Who would believe such, were they even to swear that they most heartily love their captain, parent, or sovereign? What manner of love, then, is that of a Christian who protests with his lips that he loves God, and whose heart perhaps teems with affectionate sentiments, yet is barren of works pleasing to the Lord and conformable to the divine will? This is a monstrous pretence of love, in flagrant contradiction with itself.

228. Our Lord desired to unite Himself to the soul of St Teresa, in the closest and most sublime bonds of love and friendship that can exist between the Creator and His creature in this wretched land of exile, and the most like to those bonds of everlasting and indissoluble love that are to be perfected by God Himself in our heavenly country; and began by making a compact with her that they should love each other mutually with the purest love possible. But what, think you, did our Blessed Lord, Who appeared to her in visible shape, demand as a condition of the lasting establishment of so loving an alliance? You might guess that Teresa was hereafter to burn, like the fabled salamander, in the flames of charity. By no means. He merely told her that it was now time that she should look upon His interests as her own, and that He would ever take thought of what should be to her advantage.* This is real love, which requires that each person shall undertake to forward, as if it were a personal interest, what is in accordance with the will of the other, and both strive in all earnestness for their reciprocal advantage. This is the very refinement of love, because it is wholly grounded on deeds which are pleasing to the person whom we love. Very like to this was the contract of love made between our Lord and St Catharine of Sienna, when, appearing to her under a ravishing form, Christ said: "Do thou, daughter, never cease to care for My interests, and I will take care of thine."† So true is it, as St

* Mansion 7, chap. 2.

† Filia, cogita tu de me; et ego cogitabo continenter de te.

Gregory says: "That deeds conformable to the tastes and wishes of the beloved one, are the touchstone of true love."*

229. I cannot discover a more noteworthy instance of this most fervent charity, grounded on the fulfilment of the divine will, than that left us by Fr. Diego de Saura, of the Society of Jesus. The lively and inflamed desire he cherished within him, of invariably going in search of God's will and good pleasure, inspired him with implacable hate for self-will, which he regarded, and most justly, as the enemy of the will of God, that it is ever thwarting by its disorderly inclinations. He determined, therefore, to bind down this self-will by the strong and strait bonds of repeated vows, to the end that it might be no longer able to move at its own whim, but only in the direction in which God's will might impel it: and that these vows might avail to keep his will in complete subjection to that of God, he bound himself by vow to whatever might be of the greatest conceivable perfection. I here give the form of these vows, left behind him in his own handwriting. "For the love of the Most Holy Trinity, of Jesus and of Mary, and of all the Saints, I vow to strive after the greatest perfection. Thou knowest, O God, that my desire is to die for Thy love, for the mere purpose of serving Thee. O God, my Love! receive me into Thy service, and bear with my misery. I vow to strive to attain an angelic purity; to be attached to nothing, save only Thee, my God; to obey in all things that are commanded by those set over me, and to endeavour to do their will with all possible earnestness and perfection; to offer up whatever I shall do, say, think, or desire, for the love of the Most Holy Trinity; of my Lord Jesus Christ; of my Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary; of my holy Father, St Ignatius; and of all the Saints; to keep my rules, and never to do aught that may be, in the slightest degree, sinful or imperfect; to strive, with God's grace, to maintain myself continually in actual love of my God, conformity with his will, and desire of pleasing Him: and ever to keep myself without interruption in His presence."

230. The earnestness with which he made to God the unreserved offering implied in these arduous vows, was so heartfelt

* Probatio dilectionis, exhibitio est operis.

and sincere, that, not content with writing it in ink, he would have it recorded in his heart's blood. He therefore inflicted so deep a wound in the region of his heart, that the scar remained till his dying day, and it was with the blood that gushed from this wound that he wrote the vows above mentioned.

231. In the course of time, being ever more inflamed with the desire of fulfilling the good pleasure of his God, he vowed to help by prayer, and in every possible way, in the conversion of sinners, Pagans, and heretics; in perfecting the just; in reclaiming the whole world; and in striving after the salvation of all without exception; for which ends he daily made the offering of his blood, his reputation, and his life. Not content with this, he continued to increase his obligations by new vows, such as of practising the most perfect virtue, the lowliest humility, the greatest modesty, silence, and chastity, with a purity truly angelic; the highest obedience, mercy, alms-giving, patience, gentleness, fortitude, justice, devotion, piety, gratitude, prayer; the continual exercise of God's presence, of mortification, of zeal of souls, of charity, and so forth. But the brightest gem that decked the crown of so many most arduous vows, and rendered him worthy of an everlasting remembrance, was his faithfulness in fulfilling them, since he could with truth leave on record the following words: "I have never wittingly allowed any occasion to pass by of mortifying myself, or of doing any virtuous act which was in my power."

232. I freely own that I greatly marvel at the singular earnestness of this saintly Religious, in thus seeking, on all occasions, the divine good pleasure, and in not swerving a hair's-breadth from the line traced out by the adorable will of God; but, on the contrary, binding down his own will with the powerful bonds of manifold vows of uninterrupted subjection to the will of his Maker. Here, surely, we have an instance of a most extraordinary love of God. Not that I mean to insinuate that the reader should imitate this great servant of God, by making the like vows. No, I should consider it the height of rashness, to contract obligations so far transcending human strength, without a most particular inspiration from on high, the help of an extraordinary

grace, and the deliberate counsel of ghostly advisers. I only mean, that if a Christian aspire to the perfect Love of God, he should, at least, faithfully perform what the divine law requires of him, and conform to God's most righteous will in all things, however hard, difficult, and painful the thing may prove, submitting his own will to that of God by means of a generous denial of self.

CHAPTER II.

THE GROUNDS OF THIS CONFORMITY.

233. We now proceed to treat of the foundation on which our will must take its stand, in order to conform to the divine will, and of the motives by which we may maintain within us this holy conformity. To my mind, this foundation is a steadfast, firm, and lively conviction, that nothing happens in the vast system of the universe, that is not in subordination to the will of God. I call it the foundation, as it is plain that man cannot render himself conformable to God's will, in all possible circumstances, unless he be fully persuaded that nothing can happen that is not in some sense willed by the Almighty, as the Maker, and Supreme Ruler of the world. And, indeed, it seems that this conviction is rightly styled the foundation of so sublime a virtue, since, as a house must necessarily totter when its foundations give way, so, failing this conviction, which has its source in faith, the virtue of conformity, comprising as we have shown, all the most precious prerogatives of charity, cannot subsist. The present Chapter will be devoted to the consideration of this fundamental principle; the motives will be considered in the following Chapters.

234. Whatever happens in heaven or on earth, is the effect of either a necessary or of a free cause. Necessary causes are those that produce their effects without choice or deliberation, and of which the effects follow with equal necessity. Such are the effects produced by the sun and moon, by the planets, the stars,

the earth, the plants, and herbs; by the air, the winds, and the sea. Such, too, are the results, whether agreeable or disagreeable, which nature produces either within us, or around us. Now, of all these effects God is the true cause, for they are all willed by Him, and are each of them individually foreordained by His positive decree, and He concurs efficaciously, as First Cause, on Whom all things necessarily depend in their production.* From all eternity God has decreed one or another concatenation of natural causes, whence result, at various times, the fertility of the fields, or their barrenness; the wholesome temperature of the air favourable to health and life, or its deadly influences; which let loose hurricanes for the destruction of the crops, and storms that strew the sea with wrecks; or else, bring on healthy seasons with a due balance of rain and dry weather, of cold and heat. From all eternity God has decreed our birth, either from this illustrious or that humble stock; from rich or poor parents. He has planned that due admixture of the humours in our bodily frame which produces health, or that unequal combination that results in disease; and the same holds good of all else that befalls us in the course of our life. Hence if we refuse to submit to the divine will in the several effects produced by natural causes, when they chance to be painful or disagreeable to us, we rebel against God's will, and demand that our blind and disorderly will may prevail over His most righteous appointments.

235. I am aware that many of these natural phenomena are called evils because they afflict us, but, in reality, they are not real evils, for there is no moral turpitude in any one of them, and moral wrong alone is real evil. Further, they are intended by God as means to a supreme good, which is our eternal happiness. Such are hail storms, tempests, seasons of scarcity, earthquakes, plagues, seasons of great mortality, loss of health, pain, fever, sickness. Such, too, are the extremities of heat and of cold, over-abundant rains, lengthened drought, the loss of goods, the failure of trade; destitution, poverty and misery. All these things are classed as evils, but they are great goods, because they are

* Omnia opera nostra operatus es nobis. Isai. xxvi. 12.

foreordained of God from everlasting, for the salvation of our souls, in order that when visited by such calamities, we may repent of our faults and attain the possession of never-ending bliss; or else, that by patient endurance of these trials, we may gather a great store of merits, the result of which will be never-fading palms and crowns in paradise. This is what the Prophet Amos assures us of, saying, *Shall there be evil in the city which the Lord has not done?** Whatever God does, most assuredly He does it for no other end than our great advantage. Wherefore, every Christian who has the light of faith, should, under such trials, be calmly resigned to God's will, and kiss the loving hand that smites him, the rod that scourges him, repeating, in humble submission, the words of the Psalmist, *Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me.*†

236. We now come to the second point we undertook to explain, namely, to the consideration of the effects produced by free causes, which are, in other words, the actions of intelligent creatures endowed with free-will; the actions, that is, of men, of Angels, and of demons. And as these are not unfrequently sources of trouble to us, we will look into their dependence on God's will, in order that we may behave with due Conformity in their regard. True it is that such actions proceed from the will of created agents, who, while performing them, were free not to do them; yet still do they depend on the will of God, either positive or negative, to use the language of the Schoolmen. If these acts are virtuous and holy, they are positively intended by God, both because they are either commanded or counselled by Him, and because He takes a special delight in concurring in their production. If, on the contrary, they are evil, they are not indeed willed by God, but only permitted by Him inasmuch as, for His own most exalted ends, which are inscrutable to our limited minds, He does not hinder them, though quite able to do so. He concurs therein, it is true, yet reluctantly, and, so to speak, in despite of Himself, as He complains by the mouth of Isaias, *Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou*

* Si erit malum in civitate, quod Dominus non fecerit? Amos iii. 6.

† Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt. Psal. xxii. 4.

*hast wearied Me with thy iniquities:** so that even these actions depend to a certain extent on His divine will.

237. It will further be requisite, for our purpose, to observe that every sinful act implies two distinct things; the malice of the act which God wills not, but only permits; and certain results which flow from such an act. Now as these results are not morally evil, God allows them for His own most holy purposes; purposes which are chiefly concerned with our spiritual advantage. For instance, an enemy lessens your honour by complaints and slanders; or outrages you with opprobrious words. We must here distinguish between the calumny, the verbal outrage—which, though He permits it, God does not will, but on the contrary abominates and punishes—and the hurt or displeasure you are made to feel thereby; this God intends, in order to exercise your humility, patience, and charity towards those that ill-use you. A thief secretly takes away from you something of great price; an unfavourable judge delivers a decision against you that is unjust; a servant gives you constant annoyance by the evil habits which he has contracted. In these several cases, God certainly does not will the injustice or the bad habits of your neighbours, but He does will to afflict you, to try you by the crosses which come to you from the perversity of your fellows; and He seeks herein the salvation and perfection of your soul. For which reason, abstracting from the faults of others, you must in every cross that falls to your lot, be wholly resigned to the divine will.

238. The practice of this most important doctrine may be learnt from one of the greatest heroes of antiquity, I mean holy Job. When at the very height of his prosperity, he all of a sudden received, from every side, the most distressing tidings. A messenger arrives, breathless with the news that the Chaldeans have driven away all his herds; another comes to tell him that the Sabeans have slaughtered his numerous household of slaves. To this succeeds a third, with the far more mournful intelligence that a mighty wind, smiting the four corners of his house, had

* Servire me fecisti in peccatis tuis, præbuisti mihi laborem in iniquitatibus tuis. Isai. xliii. 24.

buried his sons beneath the ruins. What did Job do meanwhile? What did he say on receiving the tidings of so many and such dreadful calamities? He merely replied: *The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away.** "How now, holy Prophet! God, you say, God has taken away: surely you mistake. It is not God, but the treacherous Chaldean robbers, that have driven away your herds: not God, but the barbarous and bloodthirsty Sabeans have put your slaves to the sword. God did not lay your house low, and kill your dear children; it was the doing of the devil who was sworn to destroy you." "For God's sake, speak not thus," might we fancy this most patient man to exclaim. "I know well how to trace troubles to their right source. God it is who overwhelms me with so many grievous calamities. True, God did not desire the robbery by these Chaldeans, the cruelty of the Sabeans, the malice of the devils who are my persecutors; but He does will that I be tried, be afflicted, and suffer severely. He allows these sins in my enemies as means of making me suffer. He employs the malice of my persecutors as a rod wherewith to scourge me." Such is the development given to this passage, and in sober truth, by St Augustine. "It is not," he writes, "Satan, nor the Sabeans, nor yet the Chaldeans, that have despoiled Job of his wealth; it is God: His will be done, may He be blessed for evermore!" †

239. We may now form a true estimate of the folly of certain Christians, who, when injured by men, do not remember that the trial which causes them inward grief, comes from the hand of God. My present distress, says one, does not come from God, but from the malice of an enemy, whose tongue robs me of my good name, and whose conduct is ever thwarting my interests. My suffering, says another, is not from God, but from a perverse neighbour who provokes me by his ill-natured remarks,—from a wayward and unruly son whose ill-behaviour grieves me,—from a peevish wife who cannot let me be at peace. My trials, will she say, in her turn, are not God's work, but arise from my husband's unreason-

* Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit.

† Non dicit Job: Dominus dedit, diabolus abstulit: *Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit, sit nomen Domini benedictum.* In Psal. xxxiv.

able conduct, his bad habits, his extravagance. Such persons, according to St Dorotheus, are like dogs which, when struck by a stone, rush in a fury to bite the guiltless stone that has smitten them, instead of turning to discover the hand which has dealt them the painful blow. For these people fret, rage, and grow furious with their neighbour who smites them either with the tongue, or by some wrong action of the hand; they should rather lift up their eyes to discover the beneficent hand of God aiming these strokes at them: for God allows all this trouble to befall, in expiation of their sins, and for the increase of their merit.*

240. Far different was the behaviour of holy David when reviled by Semei, a man of low birth, in those most outrageous terms: *Go forth thou blood-thirsty man, thou man of Belial;* † and who, moreover, pelted the king with a shower of stones. David cared not to notice either the hand or the unbridled tongue of him that outraged him; but lifting up his soul to God, he acknowledged that the blows which smote him came from the hand of the Lord; that it was his Lord Who sent him the abuse. ‡ Wherefore he exclaimed, "Shall I be so bold as to withstand His most righteous and holy will?" § Thus should we too behave, if the light of faith really be kindled within us, when tried by the divers evils we have to undergo from the perverse will of others. We may conclude then that whatever evils can happen to us in this life, whether they arise from necessary causes, such as disease, pain, the loss of life or health, scarcity, sterility, pestilence, earthquakes, the inclemency of the seasons, poverty or misery; or whether they are the result of the action of free causes, as injuries, wrongs, affronts, injustice, slander, opposition, annoyance, or any other effect of the malice of our fellows; they each and all most assuredly depend on God's appointment,

* Nos vero, cum verbum ullum in nos dictum audimus, canes imitamur. Hi enim, si quis in eos lapidem jecerit, jacentem lapidem missum mordent. Ita nos, Deo relicto, qui nobis tribulationes hujusmodi ad peccatorum nostrorum purgationem procurat, ad lapidem, hoc est ad proximum currimus. Doct. 7.

† Egredere vir sanguinum, et vir Belial.

‡ Dominus præcepit ei, ut malediceret David.

§ Quis est, qui audeat dicere: Quare sic fecit? II. Regum. xvj. 7.

Who, from eternity, has so disposed for our greater advantage. Wherefore it behoves us to submit to them in a disposition of humble subordination to His most holy will in all that grieves and troubles us.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST MOTIVE OF CONFORMITY TO THE DIVINE WILL. GOD HAS INFINITE CLAIMS UPON OUR SUBMISSION.

241. It being then established that nothing happens in this world except in dependence on the will of the Most High, we now proceed to show how great is God's right to our submission, and how complete is the corresponding obligation on our part to conform in all things to His most righteous arrangements. A man may be master of a thing and claim to make every possible use of it, either because he has made it or because he has acquired it by purchase. In this manner, he that builds a house, fashions a statue, or paints a picture, is the master of his own work; and so too the person who buys them is the master of his purchase. Now it is precisely on these two titles that God's claim to an absolute dominion over ourselves and our acts, especially over those of our will—the principal and most noble—is based. His almighty hands have made us, and He has bought us at the price of His own Blood. Let us begin with the first-named of these two claims to our subjection.

242. The sculptor is owner of the statue, because it has been carved with his own chisel; so too, the potter is master of the vessel his hands have shaped, and the painter of the picture he has limned with his pencil on the bare canvas. Nor are they masters only of their handiwork, but they can put it to any use to which it is suited, since it is their right to dispose of it in every place, and in any mode to part with it, to retain it, to destroy it at their pleasure. But what comparison is there between this

dominion of theirs and the sovereign and absolute dominion of God over us, our will, and its every act, in His relation of our Maker? For, after all, the sculptor did not make his statue out of nothing, but out of a block of marble which was not the work of his hands. The painter obtained his colours elsewhere, and blended them together on a canvas made ready to his hands. The potter did not fashion his vessel out of nothing, but out of clay which was dug out of the ground. But God, in giving us our being, did not draw us out of cold stone, nor out of lifeless canvas, nor out of soft clay, but out of nothing, without employing any material which could share with Him in the production of our noble substance. The artists mentioned above, made use of a most limited power, in order to give shape to their several productions. But God set in motion a boundless power, in order to give us our being; for it needed nothing less to draw us out of the bottomless depths of our own nothingness. How great, then, is the dominion due to God from our will, requiring it in all things to bow to His will; and what a wrong do we inflict upon Him whenever we withhold from Him so just a subordination! If it be wronging the owner of an orchard to pluck the fruit of trees not made, but only planted, by him, what injury is not done to God when we refuse to submit to Him that very will which He has created for Himself alone!

243. God sets such store by this sovereign dominion and supreme mastership which He has over us as our Maker, that in publishing His commandments to the people of Israel, He repeats more than a score of times, in two chapters of Leviticus, the words, *I am the Lord*, and then finishes with, *Therefore shall ye observe all My commandments, and all My judgments, and do them: I am the Lord;** as if He should say to His chosen people, "I ask of you this and that; and mind, I have a right to exact its fulfilment, because I am your Master. I require of you this and the other; and remember that I can claim the faithful performance of whatever I will, for I am the Lord." Nay more, St Augustine says, that God's only motive for the well-known prohi-

* Ego dominus: .... custodite omnia præcepta mea, et universa judicia, et facite ea: Ego dominus. Levit. xix. 37.

bition made to Adam of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge planted in the midst of the earthly Paradise, was to exercise His sovereign mastership over our first parents. The holy Doctor represents Adam excusing his transgression, and cloaking it in the following language:—"If the fruit of this tree is good, wherefore should I not touch it? If evil, what is it doing in the midst of Paradise? Wherefore cumbers it the ground with its baleful shadow?"* Then he supposes God to reply, "The tree is good, but I forbid you to touch it. If you must know why, it is because I am the Master, and you My servant. I wish to exercise My rule over you. This is My sole reason; if it suffice not, you disdain to be My subject, and refuse the submission which you are bound to give.†" Hence the reader will not be tempted to think excessive the severity of the punishment with which God's justice visited the first disobedience upon Adam and his race, despoiling them of gifts both of the natural and the supernatural order, and overwhelming them with woes for the mere non-compliance shown by eating a single fruit. Because not to submit to God's will is a kind of rebellion, and a practical refusal to own God as our Maker, Master, Lord, and King: it is an attempt to snatch the crown from the Almighty brow. In what else did the Centurion believe that the glory of his military rank consisted, but in seeing his soldiers and servants attentive to all his behests;‡ consequently to withhold subjection from the will of God is, as it were, to attempt to rob Him of the sovereignty He has over us, and to hurl Him from His throne.

244. We shall perceive still more plainly the monstrosity of such rebellion, by contrasting with it the submission paid by senseless creatures to the dominion of the Almighty, and to the least sign of His will, destitute though they be of knowledge and

* Si bona est arbor, quare non tango? Si mala est, quid facit in Paradiso?

† Ideo est in Paradiso, quia est bona; sed nolo tangas. Quare? quia dominus sum, et servus es. Hæc tota causa est. Si parva causa est, dedignaris esse servus. In Psal. lxx,

‡ Nam et ego homo sum sub potestate constitutus, habens sub me milites, et dico huic, vade, et vadit: et alii, veni, et venit: et servo meo, fac hoc, et facit. Matth. viij. 9.

of sense. Open the Bible at the beginning of the Book of Genesis, and there you will read that God has no sooner uttered His commands, ordering light to separate from darkness, than night and day began their constant succession; the waters above the firmament parted from those beneath it, and these gathered together in their allotted place; the earth was clad with verdure; the trees brought forth their fruit; and every creature forthwith acted in obedience to the divine summons, the promptness and fulness of which obedience is so pithily set forth in the inspired record, by the often-repeated words: *And it was so.**

245. Behold how all inanimate creatures are ever on the alert to do the will of their Divine Maker. *God looks on the earth*, says the Psalmist, *and makes it tremble.*† *He it is*, says the Prophet Baruch, *that sendeth forth light, and it goeth; He called it back, and it obeyeth Him with fear.*‡ Again, the same Prophet says, that *the stars gave light in their watches and rejoiced: when God called them, they said, Here we are: and with gladness they shined to Him that made them.*§ God commands the sea not to overflow its bounds, and it reverently confines itself within the limits marked out for it.‖ The Redeemer chid the winds that troubled the sea, and they were obediently hushed, and there was forthwith *a great calm*,¶ to the amazement of the beholders, who, wondering, said to each other, *What manner of man is this, for the winds and sea obey Him.*** In a word, all things created, and, as the Psalmist sings, *Fire, hail, snow, ice, stormy whirlwinds, do His word*;†† ever holding themselves in readiness to obey the commands of their God. So true is it, as St Jerome says, that all creatures have a sense of

* Et factum est ita . . . et factum est ita . . . et factum est ita. Genes. i.

† Qui respicit terram, et facit eam tremere. Psal. civ. 32.

‡ Qui emittit lumen, et vadit; et vocavit illud, et obedit illi in tremore. Baruch. iij. 33.

§ Stellæ vocatæ sunt, et dixerunt, adsumus: et cum jucunditate luxerunt ei qui fecit eas.

‖ Hucusque venies, et non procedes amplius: et hic confringes tumentes fluctus tuos. Job. xxxviij. 11.

¶ Imperavit ventis . . . facta est tranquillitas.

** Qualis est hic, quia venti et mare obediunt ei? Matth. viij. 27.

†† Ignis, grando, nix, glacies, spiritus procellarum, quæ faciunt verbum ejus. Psal. cxlviij. 8

their Maker; for though many of them be wanting in life and feeling, they still have an instinct which impels them to do the Will of Him Who made them.*

246. Man alone, gifted with reason, can be found to show more unreason than beings which are deprived of reason and feeling, by withdrawing himself from subjection to God's Will. Man alone, then, because conscious of God's sovereign dominion over him, and of his own entire dependence on God, is found to kick against the goad, to lift up his head and to say, *I will not serve*, nor bend to the determination of my God, nor yield submission to His most righteous decrees or dispositions. Man alone, endowed with free will, of which all other creatures are incapable, makes use of the noble gift of his liberty, in order boldly to shake off the yoke of due obedience to the commands of the Most High, and shows himself rebellious and guilty in proportion to the freedom he enjoys. What monstrosity can ever equal this?

247. But further, God's sovereign lordship over us is not derived merely from His being our Maker, but also from His having redeemed us; wherefore to Him, not only as our Maker, but also as to our Redeemer, is due our full submission and entire Conformity to whatever He wills. No one is ignorant of the state of irremediable perdition into which we had fallen, when, having been enslaved by the infernal tyranny of sin, we were doomed to lie bound in chains and fire, in endless imprisonment. God, touched with pity for us, resolved to rescue us from so cruel and atrocious a slavery. In order to deliver us from the hands of our enemies, He did not pay down sums of gold or silver, nor did He part with a priceless store of gems and diamonds; but He drew forth from His veins His own life-blood, to the last drop, a ransom so priceless that with it no treasure can possibly be compared. In order to attain some distant idea of this truth, go through this reckoning. Put into an accurate balance, on one side a single drop of the Divine Blood shed by

* Omnes creaturæ creatorem sentiunt, non errore hæreticorum, qui omnia putant animantia, sed majestate creatoris: quæ apud nos insensibilia, illi sensibilia sunt. Lib. 1, in cap. viii. Matth.

the Son of the Father Everlasting for our ransom, and on the other all the gold of Peru, all the pearls of the Indian Ocean. Add to these the most costly tissues of Phrygia, the finest marbles of Numidia, the purple of Sidon, the perfumes of Arabia. Will not the balance lean on the side of such a priceless heap? By no means; a single drop of the Precious Blood is of infinitely greater value. Suppose God to unlock the inexhaustible stores of His almighty power, and to pour into one of the scales all that we can conceive of most rare, most precious, and most rich. Will it yield under the weight of these immense and boundless treasures? You cannot doubt the answer. God Himself cannot find in the stores of His inconceivable might anything so precious as one little drop of His own Blood; all possible treasures cannot equal its value. But if a single drop of the Divine Blood is of inestimable price, what shall we say of that ocean of Blood shed by Christ to redeem us? What account should we not make of so many sorrows, such torments; so many injuries and outrages; of the untold ignominies which Jesus underwent; offering all to ransom us from never-ending slavery to our hellish foes? He alone Who redeemed us poor wretches, can form a just idea of the price paid.

248. I say, then, if a man be the real master of his slave—though himself only a man like that slave—because he has bought him at the price of a few pieces of money; if for so trifling a value he may consider himself entitled to such dominion over the person and actions of the slave, that the luckless wight cannot move a step at his own pleasure, but is bound to be dependent, in everything that he does, on his master's will; what is not the dominion God has acquired over us, and His right to rule all our actions, whether of body or of soul?—especially since, when we were utterly lost, and in the power of our enemies, He has ransomed us at an infinite, an incomparable, an unspeakable price? at a price that were more than sufficient to redeem not only the whole world, but countless, infinite worlds? And if a slave, for refusing to submit to the will of the master who has bought him, does a grievous injury and is deserving of severe punishment, how great is the wrong which we do to God, Who

has bought us at so high a cost; and what should not be our punishment, if we refuse to conform to every sign of His will, and presume to place our own will above that of our Heavenly Father? This is no less a subversion of order, and no less abominable, than if the earth were to be set above Heaven!

249. It is therefore enough if we keep our eyes continually fixed on the copious streams of Blood poured forth by the Son of God from His veins to ransom our souls from the slavery of hell; it is sufficient if we ponder the racking torments which form the price of our redemption. Soon shall we realise the unbounded sovereignty to which, by this title alone, God fairly claims at our hands, together with the supreme obligation we are under of belonging wholly to Him, and of conforming ourselves in all things with His most righteous appointments. It should not even occur to our minds to set our disordered will above His most holy decrees, and with the most crying and hateful injustice, to prefer it to His adorable Will.

250. Besides the absolute right God has that in all things His holy Will should be done, on account of His sovereign dominion and lordship over us, by the two-fold title of creation and redemption, there are other most urgent motives which oblige us to do His bidding. Because, in addition to other claims which He has to our obedience, He is our Father, as we daily profess when we say, *Our Father, Who art in heaven.* And we do right to address Him by the tender name of Father; for, besides having given us our natural being, He has, by means of sanctifying grace, made us partakers of His own life and nature, to use the expression of St Peter.* And as a most loving Father, He keeps in store for us the inheritance of an everlasting kingdom, in which we shall enjoy happiness without let or hindrance. But who does not know that a father has an unquestioned right to his children's subjection and obedience, and to expect them to execute his will? God is, moreover, our Friend, by virtue of this same grace, which, as we have already explained, is a real friendship between man and his Maker. It is denied by none that friendship requires union of will between friends, according to

* Ut efficiamini divinæ consortes naturæ. II. Pet. i. 4.

the trite adage, "*A friend is another self.*" And in truth, David and Jonathan, those models of true friendship, were as one soul in two bodies.* God, on His part, perfectly fulfils the laws of friendship, since, in all things lawful and suitable, He does the will of them that fear and love Him.† His eyes are always open to see the wants of just souls who hold fast to their friendship with Him; and He always lends a willing ear to hearken to their petitions, and to gratify them by carrying out their wishes.‡ However, in order that this holy friendship may be complete on both sides, we must needs (if we would not prove traitorous and disloyal to so great a Friend) conform ourselves in everything to His will. And all the more, both because God has an infinite right that His will should be done in all things, and because we lie under an absolute obligation to seek His good pleasure, which is the main rule of all justice, uprightness, and holiness. If, then, He disdains not to do our will, surely, in our turn, we should make a point of submitting to His.

251. But the most powerful motive for this holy conformity, and one we should keep ever fixedly before our mind, is, beyond a doubt, that God is the Sovereign Good, Who deserves that all creatures should conform to His will. Goodness claims love. I have previously observed that, what the magnet is to iron, that goodness is to our will, drawing it by a sweet attraction; and the greater the goodness which is reflected in the beloved object, the greater too its power to attract the will, and to kindle in it a requital of love. Now, as God is Infinite Goodness, He possesses an infinite attraction for our love, and deserves to be loved beyond all measure, more than anything else, whether within or without us; more than our body and soul; more than any will or inclination of ours; and consequently He is to be preferred to any and every natural propensity of our will. For to love is nothing else but to wish the well-being of the person beloved, and that, too, in the measure of his deserts. Since, then, God is infinitely deserving that to His will be postponed every single

* Anima Jonathæ conglutinata est animæ David. I. Reg. xviij. 1.

† Voluntatem timentium se faciet. Psal. cxlv. 19.

‡ Oculi Dei super justos, et aures ejus in preces eorum.

desire of our own, if we love Him in real earnest, our will must invariably be sacrificed to His.

252. A single act of this conformity on the part of the High-priest Heli shows how acceptable to God is a lowly submission of our will to His most righteous purposes. This High-priest was held accountable by God for all the sacrileges committed by his sons, and for the public scandal which they had given the people in the sacred tabernacle; since, when these disorders came to his knowledge, he had failed to rebuke his children.* Therefore the Lord declared to him, by the mouth of the Prophet Samuel, that he should be deprived of the priesthood, of his position in the sanctuary, of his two sons, and even of his very life. On hearing so terrible a sentence thundered forth by the Almighty in punishment of his sins, Heli bowed his head, and in lowly subjection gave expression to these beautiful words: "God wills this; let, then, that be done which is pleasing in His eyes." † This act of conformity and resignation to the divine will so prevailed with the heart of God, that, according to the view of several grave authorities referred to by Cornelius à Lapide, Heli merited, in spite of his grievous sin, to be saved eternally.‡ Let him, then, that would win God's heart imitate this High-priest.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW MOTIVES OF SELF-INTEREST MOVING US TO ENTIRE CONFORMITY WITH THE WILL OF GOD.

253. But were the love of God so faint within us as not to have the power to subject our will to the divine will, the love of ourselves, at least, should avail to bring us to this state of submission,

* Eo quod noverat indigne agere filios suos, et non corripuerit eos.

† Dominus est, quod bonum est in oculis suis faciat. I. Reg. iij. 13.

‡ Vide hic, responsum Heli dignum sacerdote pœnitente, æqui animi, et resignati ad omnem Dei voluntatem, et castigationem tam horrendam; ob quod Heli salvus videtur. Ita Theodoretus, etc.

to which we are in duty bound. For neither is there, nor can there be, anything more advantageous to ourselves than to do in everything the will of God. The reason of this I have already touched upon in the second Chapter of this Article, and this being the proper place, will now develop it more fully, since, unless it be deeply graven in the mind, we shall never succeed in finding peaceful repose in the holy will of God amid all our manifold distresses. We need, then, to be firmly convinced that whatever God wills or allows to happen to us, He wills and permits with a view to our good; and that it evil result from distress, it arises from the bad use we make of it, especially in refusing to conform to a most loving Providence.

254. This is an undeniable truth, because it is founded wholly on revelation. We learn in the Sacred Writings that God compasses us about on every side with the shield of His favour,* so as to ward off from us real evils, and to leave us open only to such as, in truth, are for our advantage, since they are meant to result in our profit. We read that God, beholding our misery, takes thought for our welfare;† that *He keeps us as the apple of His eye*;‡ that *to touch us is to touch the apple of His eye.*§ We meet with still more tender expressions, wherein God disdains not to compare Himself to a hen gathering her young brood under her wings, declaring to us that even so does He gather us under the fostering wings of His protection.‖ At one time He compares Himself to an eagle spreading its wings over its young, and hovering over them, to teach us that, in like manner, He too is ever at our side, sheltering us beneath the wings of His loving Providence;¶ at another time He likens His love to the love of a mother who cannot forget her child, assuring us that, even if she should forget the fruit of her womb, yet will He never be unmindful of

* Domine, ut scuto bonæ voluntatis tuæ coronasti nos. Psal. v. 23.

† Ego autem mendicus sum, et pauper, Dominus sollicitus est mei. Psal. xxxix. 28.

‡ Custodi me ut pupillam oculi.

§ Qui tetigerit vos, tanget pupillam oculi mei. Zach. ij. 8.

‖ Quoties volui congregare filios tuos, quemadmodum gallina congregat pullos suos sub alas, et noluisti. Matth. xxiij. 37.

¶ Sicut aquila provocans ad volandum filios suos, et super eos volitans, expandit alas, et assumpsit eam et portavit in humeris suis. Deut. xxxij. 11.

us, but will ever bear us jealously in His hands, as the object dearest to His heart;* nay, He goes so far as to make His own that other expression, so full of sweetness, that He will, like a tender mother, clasp us to His bosom, whence we shall drink of the milk of His mercy.† All these expressions of tenderness are so many proofs of the loving care entertained for us by God, Who cannot wish anything to be to us a real evil.

255. I have said a real evil—for, as has already been observed, many a thing is reckoned an evil because it grieves us, which in truth is a real benefit, inasmuch as God turns it to our advantage. We have now to see to what useful purpose God puts those trials which we call evils, although, viewed by the light of faith, they prove to be substantial benefits.

256. In the first place, the trials which afflict us in this life are oftentimes designed by God to be the means whereby we attain to great temporal prosperity; they cannot, therefore, properly speaking, be considered as evils, since, even in the natural order, they are productive of great good. Joseph was sold as a wretched slave by his brethren to the Ishmaelites: loaded with chains, and a close prisoner in a dark dungeon, he bewailed his hard fate. Who could have imagined that the ignominy of chains and the disgrace of slavery were destined to be the means of conducting Joseph to the throne, and of procuring for him the viceroyalty of Egypt? Yet so it was; for, whilst no one thought of it, God, in His Providence, was secretly preparing to turn the shame of a prison into the glory of the highest honours. Saul lost his beasts of burden, and, taking the loss for a great misfortune, full of anxiety he scoured the plains, climbed the hills, traversed the woods and forests, in quest of his beasts. Who would have divined that on that very day Saul was to find the royal crown and throne of Israel, in lieu of a few worthless animals? Yet so it was; and God, Who foresaw it, was making ready to compensate the loss with the gain of a kingdom. On the contrary,

* Numquid oblivisci potest mulier infantem suum, ut non misereatur filio uteri sui? et si illa oblita fuerit, ego tamen non obliviscar. Ecce in manibus meis descripsi te. Isai. xlix. 15.

† Ad ubera potabimini, et super genua blandientur vobis. Quomodo si cui mater blandiatur, ita ego consolabor vos. Ibid. lxvj. 12.

it never could have occurred to any mind that the honours which Aman had received from King Assuerus, and his advancement to the position of favourite courtier of his sovereign, were ordained to conduct him to a shameful death on the gibbet. It is nevertheless certain that Aman was brought to this pass by his rise to power. God knew it, and decreed that the opprobrium of the scaffold should be the end of Aman's ambitious and prosperous career. Therefore I infer that what we take to be evil is often the means of temporal advantage, and that, consequently, all sensible men will allow themselves to be led by God, Who, in His loving Providence, seeks nothing but our good.

257. In the second place, it often pleases God to visit us in this life with many grievous afflictions, that we may be spared the more lasting and incomparably more severe chastisements of the next life: thus we purchase by suffering in this world immunity from pain in the life to come. Is not this a substantial advantage cheaply bought at the cost of a trifling evil? Holy Job was well convinced of this truth, and this is why he begged of God not to spare him, but to crush him with the weight of affliction, appreciating, as he did, the greatness of the benefit which God bestowed upon him in commuting the dreadful torments of the next life into the slight sufferings of this present one.*

258. Thirdly, God not unfrequently sends us trials with a view to our amendment, and to withdraw from our path the obstacles which our faults place in the way of our salvation. It was in this sense that the heroic Judith addressed her nation, when it was circled round about by the army, and on the point of falling into the power of the tyrant Holofernes: "Fellow-countrymen," she said to them, "have confidence; for the extremity to which we are reduced is intended, not for our ruin, but for the amendment of our lives."† So, too, thought the author of that Book of the Machabees, where, after describing the havoc made by the impious

* Quis det ut veniat petitio mea . . . et qui cœpit, ipse me conterat; solvat manum suam, et succidat me: et hæc sit mihi consolatio, ut affligens me dolore non parcat. Job, vj. 8.

† Ad emendationem, et non ad perditionem nostram evenisse credamus. Judith, viij. 27.

Antiochus amongst the Jewish people, and recounting the profanation of the Temple, and the horrors perpetrated within its precincts by the command of the perfidious monarch, he goes on to beg his readers to believe that these grievous woes were let loose upon the Jews, not for the destruction, but only for the correction of their race.* Because, in reality, God is a kind Physician, Who wounds only to heal our souls; Who tries us for a time in this world that He may reward us for ever in the next.

259. And, in truth, who would not be moved to pity at the spectacle of King Manasses stripped of his treasures and of his kingdom; reft of that which men prize more highly than all else, I mean his liberty; enslaved to King of the Assyrians, and weeping inconsolably in a shameful bondage? And yet, the accumulation of so many grievous misfortunes was the greatest boon God could have conferred upon this wicked prince; for, a prey to calamity, he entered into himself, detested his crimes, did severe penance for them, and secured his eternal salvation.† It is plain that if God had made him the monarch of the world, He would not have done him so signal a favour as by steeping him up to the very lips in temporal losses and misfortunes.

260. Who could have gazed unmoved upon the person of Naaman, general of the Syrian army, so great in the sight of his King and in the eyes of all the world, but covered from head to foot with a hideous leprosy?‡ So much greatness and glory, hand in hand with so loathsome a disease, seemed to serve no other purpose than to make him an object of greater pity. And yet this accursed evil was the source and beginning to him of the greatest blessings. For, having been perfectly healed by the Prophet Eliseus in the waters of the Jordan, Naaman attained to the know-

* Obsecro autem eos, qui hunc librum lecturi sunt, ne abhorrescant propter adversos casus; sed reputent ea quæ acciderunt, non ad interitum, sed ad emendationem esse generis nostri. II. Mach. vj. 13.

† Qui postquam coangustatus est, oravit Dominum Deum suum, et egit pœnitentiam valde coram Deo patrum suorum. II. Paralip. xxxiij. 12.

‡ Naaman princeps militiæ regis Syriæ erat vir magnus apud dominum suum, et honoratus: per illum enim dedit Dominus salutem Syriæ. Erat autem vir fortis et dives . . . sed leprosus. IV. Reg. v. 1.

ledge of the true God, and foreswore the false Deities to which he had hitherto been devoted body and soul.*

261. Who would not have considered as the most miserable of men the wretched paralytic, who had sat for thirty years on the brink of the pond called Probatica, like the reed which trembles at the edge of a stream, without ever having found all this long time a friendly hand to lift him at the right moment into the healing waters; constrained to bewail unceasingly his friendlessness, and to utter his plaintive cry: "*I have no man*, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond?"† Nevertheless, his misfortune brought him at last the greatest possible happiness; for the delay of his cure conducted him to the Saviour's feet, Who not only healed his body, but also freed his soul from the still worse palsy of sin. To these, innumerable other instances might be added, to establish clearly that whatever God ordains or allows to take place in our regard, is all for our greater good, although in our short-sighted judgment it sometimes has the appearance of evil.

262. And here we must notice the temerity of such as, weighed down by misery, complain of God, and break out into rash exclamations, saying, Such a one has everything he desires, such another is left destitute; this man has many sons, that other has none; some persons are so robust, others so weakly; these are spoiled children, those the sport of fortune. Then, at the sight of the prosperity of sinners, they go a step further, and utter such a horrible blasphemy as this: God is unjust, or unfair, in the distribution of His favours. Of such people we may safely say what St Augustine long ago said of the Jews embittered against our Holy Redeemer, that, like frenzied men maddened by the fever of their passions, they turn their fury against the Heavenly Physician, Who afflicts to heal them, and puts them to a momentary pain that He may reward them with eternal happiness. But as

* Vere scio quod non sit alius Deus in universa terra nisi tantum in Israel. . . Non faciet ultra servus tuus holocaustum, aut victimam aliis, nisi Domino.

† Hominem non habeo. Joan. v.

‡ His omnibus curationibus ejus ingrati, tamquam multâ febre frenetici, insanientes in medicum, qui venerat curare eos, cogitaverunt consilium perdendi eum. In Psal. lxiij.

these presumptuous people, who dare with such arrogance to lift up their proud heads against the decrees of God, are more like the beasts of the field than reasoning men—since they view the ordinances of Divine Providence, not with the pure eye of faith, but with eyes of flesh—they must be convinced by examples suited to their carnal vision.

263. Let them then consider the case of the rich miser in his sumptuous palace, at one time seated before a table covered with exquisite meats, at another softly reclining on a downy bed, or sauntering through pleasant gardens, followed by crowds of retainers in splendid attire. Next, let them turn their gaze on the wretched beggar lying upon the steps of the palace, with nothing but rags to hide his nakedness; covered with sores; with no linen to dress his wounds, but forced to allow the very dogs to lick them; without a morsel of bread, and without hope of getting a mouthful from the rich miser. Now, let them judge of the fate of both, and determine which of the two they would rather be, the rich man or the beggar. They will at once say, The rich man, because he is happy, not the poor man who is so wretched. Know, then, that you have judged quite wrong, and have wofully gone astray; for this rich man is that most unfortunate glutton, whose wealth, pleasures, and magnificence, were so many snares which trapped him for his everlasting ruin. The beggar is that most fortunate Lazarus, whose miseries were as so many golden keys to open to him the gates of Paradise. Earthly enjoyments were given to the former as a punishment; poverty, sores, and woes were allotted by God to Lazarus in order to increase his glorious reward. And, indeed, when Abraham replies to the rich glutton then in hell, he says, "Be mindful, son, that in thy lifetime thou hast received good things in plenty, as a reward of thy good deeds, and now God will punish for everlasting the intemperance of thine entertainments, and the pride of thy pompous style of life."* Now Lazarus received evil things wherewith God afflicted him on earth, in order to exalt him to never-ending joys above. What say you then, you who grumble against God? Those trials

* Fili, recordare quod recepisti bona in vitâ tuâ: Lazarus similiter mala. Luc. xvj. 25.

under which you moan, are they not real blessings, if submitted to with due resignation to God's will? And those enjoyments you envy others so much, are they not likely to prove to you real curses, dragging you down to the depths of misery? Submit then peaceably to God's appointments, which have no other object than your advantage.

264. But as this truth, undeniable though it be, is so much at variance with the experience of our senses that it is not easily brought home to carnal-minded men, I will set it in a clearer light by means of a wonderful event related in the works of the Fathers.* There lived together a husband and wife, as dissimilar by the contrast of their respective characters as they were well-matched by the equality of their rank; for the man was modest and gentle, while the woman was dissolute and wanton to a degree. The poor man led a wretched life; since, being ill provided as to worldly store, he was compelled to earn his pittance with the sweat of his brow, by tilling the ground; and his failing health frequently confined him to his bed with some grievous infirmity. When in health, he had to groan under the burden of excessive toil; when ill, his pains forced from him cries of suffering all day long. At length, after a wretched life, and after a most cruel agony, he died in great torture. At his death, it seemed as if the heaven, in its wrath, were spending its fury in storms; for such were the lightning and thunder which, for three days, broke over the earth, so copious was the rain that flooded it, that it was impossible to carry the corpse to the church. The neighbours, taking their cue from these untoward occurrences, rashly judged that the man must have been a great sinner, since heaven armed itself thus against him, and the earth refused to admit him into her bosom and to allow him a grave. On the other hand, his wife, amid all her debaucheries and libertinage, led a most prosperous life. Loved and courted by everybody, she enjoyed continual happiness. She never had fever, or headache, or the slightest indisposition, or any trial to ruffle her peace of mind. Reaching, at length, the term of her days, she breathed her last in calm, on so fine and bright a day, that heaven itself seemed to have been

* Ex Lib. Doctr. PP.—De Providentiâ, n. 3.

in the plot for making her death as tranquil as possible. One of their daughters pondering, one night, the wretched life and miserable death of her good father, and the prosperous career and peaceful end of her mother, accounted the one happy and the other unfortunate, and began to lay out in her own mind a plan of life like unto that of her mother. All at once she beheld before her a man, tall of stature and of a venerable presence, who asked what were the thoughts she was turning over in her mind. Terrified at this apparition, and at the question, the girl trembled and held her peace. Then the man said to her, "I know what you were thinking of; come with me, and I will show you your mistake." Taking her by the hand, he led her into so beautiful and delightful a place that it seemed an earthly Paradise. There she beheld her father, who came forth to meet her, and embracing her, called her by the tender name of daughter. The girl wanted to stay with him in this garden of delights, but her guide would not allow it, and once more led her by the hand down the declivity of a mountain into a darksome cave, which echoed with yells, screams, gnashings of teeth, and wailings; where she beheld her mother in a furnace of raging fire, and heard her cursing her former debaucheries and libertine behaviour. The terror of the young girl is not easy to be described, as may be inferred from the fact, that when the apparition had vanished, she gave herself entirely to a life of holiness, after her father's example, and persevered in this course till her dying day. The vision was related by one of the Fathers of the Desert, as having been told him by the maiden herself, at an advanced age, when she had already attained a high perfection; and it plainly shows, what we have all along been contending for, that the trials God sends us in this life are not real evils, though they prove irksome, but are rather a great boon, on account of the use to which God puts them.

265. But if this be true, what folly it is in us not to allow ourselves to be governed by the divine will in all its dispositions concerning us, since we are sure that in so doing, all our works will have a most prosperous issue. I grant that we shall have at times to suffer things contrary to our honour, to our reputation, inte-

rests, health, nay, even life itself. But what matter, if, by resigning ourselves to the divine appointment, we are most certain that all will end well, and redound to our greater good? What son is there who would hesitate to entrust with his affairs a mother by whom he knows he is tenderly loved? What friend would not willingly leave all that concerns him to the disposal of one who wishes him every good? Why, then, should we not put ourselves into the hands of God, and allow Him to guide us, whether in prosperity or adversity, in what is repugnant as well as in what is agreeable and delightful to us; knowing, as we do, that He loves us more than any mother loves her child, or any friend his friend, and that in all the appointments of His providence, our real and true welfare is always held in view? Let us, then, cast ourselves into the arms of our good Father, and allow ourselves to be ruled by His loving Will.* Let us drown all anxiety in the ocean of His boundless goodness, being assured, as we are, that He cares for us, and that He yearns for our welfare.† How passing strange it is, that while Jesus Christ, for the love of us, gave Himself up to the bloodthirsty will of the wicked men who were resolved upon killing Him,‡ we should refuse to abandon ourselves to His will, which seeks only to do us good.

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER MOTIVE OF SELF-INTEREST: CONFORMITY TO THE DIVINE WILL CONSTITUTES THE HAPPINESS OF OUR PRESENT LIFE.

266. MAN cannot live happily here below, unless his every will and wish be satisfied; for if his desires be thwarted in a single point, this alone suffices to agitate his heart, to embitter it, and fill it with discontent. What was wanting to Aman to make

* Jacta super Dominum curam tuam. **Psal. liv. 23.**

† Omnem sollicitudinem vestram projicientes in eum; quoniam ipsi cura est de vobis. **I. Pet. v. 7.**

‡ Jesum vero tradidit voluntati eorum. **Luc. xxiij. 25.**

up the sum of his beatitude? He held the first rank at the court of Assuerus, being raised above all the grandees of the kingdom. He was rolling in riches; had a numerous family; honours in plenty; neither pleasure nor power was wanting to him; yet with all this he seemed to have nothing. And why? Was it that some rival was plotting against his life; or that some envious competitor was checking the course of his fortunate career? Nothing of the kind. It was merely that Mardochai, a foreigner, sitting on the threshold of the palace, refused to bow down before him. He was not ashamed to own as much with his own lips.* The withholding of this trifling homage sufficed to fill him with a bitterness which the honours paid him by the whole kingdom could not mitigate.

267. Aman is not the only one who has been made unhappy by one little want; it is the case with as many as there are dwellers on this wretched earth of ours. Ask every one of them, and they will tell you that they are not content on account of the absence of something they desire. One man is rich, but is not noble; his neighbour has nobility, but is wanting in riches to keep up the state befitting his rank. One has plenty, but has no health to enjoy it; another's health is vigorous, but he has no riches to help him to relish his robust state. This one lives at home in perfect peace, but has out of doors an enemy who opposes his advancement. Another is free from the persecution of any foe, but his cross-grained wife and unruly children make every hour of his life miserable. In a word, there is no one in this world who is fully content, since no one has all his desires gratified.

268. To whom, then, will it be given, on this sea of misery upon which we are tossed, to reach the haven of true bliss? To none but to him who in all things conforms himself to the will of God. The reason is plain. Nothing can happen unless by God's appointment, in the sense already explained. Hence nothing can occur in the life of a spiritual man, who in all things wishes what God wishes, which can be contrary to his own will; for as each

* Et cum hæc omnia habeam, nihil me habere puto, quamdiu videro Mardochæum Judæum sedentem ante fores regias. Esther, v. 13.

event of his life is willed by God, nothing can befall that he has not himself willed; so that he is content, whatever be the case, and is in continual enjoyment of that inward peace which constitutes the happiness of this present life. Wherefore St Dorothy could say with truth, that there is no other way of doing our own will in undisturbed quiet, but to divest ourselves of any will of our own, and to submit it to that of God.*

269. We may further assert that even bodily sufferings and mental trials, of themselves capable of troubling our happiness, become sweet and pleasant to one who is wholly intent on doing God's will. For the love which the spiritual person bears to God, makes him rejoice in all that pleases God, in all that God wills. And as he sees that it pleases the Lord he should at times be afflicted, he rejoices in his own afflictions; and knowing that God would have him suffer now and then, he takes delight in such suffering. Thus is formed a compound of pain and pleasure, a mixture of bitters and sweets, most savoury to the palate of a loving soul; so that while the person is suffering he suffers not, nor can his troubles avail to disturb his calm or to trouble his happiness. The Apostles, dragged before the courts as evil doers, accused as guilty persons, must surely have felt the pain of such disgrace; yet they rejoiced at it.† And why? Because out of their love for Jesus Christ they were glad to be conformable to His will and good pleasure, which they knew to be that they should bear the evils inflicted upon them.‡ The martyrs stretched on the rack, under the strokes of scourges or iron rods, most assuredly felt their atrocious tortures, as their bodies were not made of granite; yet did they rejoice in the midst of torment, and even went so far as to reproach the tyrants with the mildness of the pains which they inflicted, in order to make their persecutors still more inhuman and hardened: so great was the delight they found in suffering for their God. Thus do souls that conform to the divine will, from the convic-

* Et sic nolentes propriam explere voluntatem, invenimur illam semper explevisse. Doctr. 9.

† Ibant gaudentes a conspectu concilii.

‡ Quia digni habiti sunt pro nomine Jesu contumeliam pati. Act. v. 41.

tion that their misfortunes and sufferings are decreed by the Will of God, and sent by His loving hands, inwardly rejoice and change their very tribulations into sources of contentment. Thus do they verify in themselves what the Wise Man says in the Proverbs, that nothing can happen that is able to ruffle the serenity of their minds, and to disturb the calm of their hearts.* So that even under trials and sufferings, they are happier than worldlings amid their vain delights.

270. We read in the Chronicles of the Cistercian Order, that a lay brother ran away three times from the Abbey of Clairvaux, and was as often brought back by St Bernard, with a kindness equal to the obstinacy of the fugitive. The third time, being deeply moved by the words and exhortations of the Saint, he took the resolution to be no longer a monk in outward garb only, but to be one also in his behaviour. He applied himself to a most exact observance of all his rules, to unwearying prayer, and to the sincere expiation of his past transgressions. God, with a view to raise him to a higher degree of perfection, smote his body with a horrible gangrene. His flesh rotted off him and, decomposing, bred worms with such acute anguish that his life was a lingering death. His putrid sores exhaled so fearful a stench, that no one could approach his couch without disgust and abhorrence. Despite of this, he was so resigned to God's will in this most painful and loathsome disease, that he never ceased giving hearty thanks for it, as for the greatest favour he could have received from the most loving hands of God. The more he suffered in body, the more he appeared cheerful and joyous in countenance and calm at heart. His flesh meanwhile becoming more and more putrid, and his pains ever increasing, brought him at length to the point of death. Every one felt sure that in this extremity at least, some one sigh or moan would escape his lips, or that the intensity of his sufferings would draw some tears from his eyes. Quite the contrary. At these last moments of his life, he began to sing with such sweetness, that the brethren, ravished at the sound, flocked into his cell and crowded round his pallet, astonished and amazed at beholding such gaiety amid such intense

* Non contristabit justum quidquid ei acciderit. Prov. xij. 21.

sufferings. Thus singing and rejoicing did he breathe his last, and was privileged to be the subject of a sermon, or rather I should say of a panegyric, preached that same day by St Bernard to his monks, in which discourse he extolled the good brother's patience and conformity to God's Will. St Paul has truly said, that *for them that love God, all things work together unto good*, whether sufferings, crosses, or death;* for they that love God rest on the Divine Will in all the events of their chequered life, however bitter and disagreeable these may be; finding in all content, peace, and calm.

271. I cannot do less than relate, in connection with the present subject, what I remember having read concerning a lady, singularly beautiful in the eyes of men, but still more beauteous in God's sight, by reason of her virtues. She, too, was visited by God with a loathsome ulcer, which, consuming by degrees her flesh, left her wasted and disfigured. No one could look at her with dry eyes, for, seeing her so disfigured, they could not but call to mind her former beauty, and be moved to pity. But she, being well content with what God had ordained in her regard, lovingly thanked Him, and always responded to the tears of her visitors with a sweet smile. The Bishop called upon her, and on beholding her, could not refrain from tears; while she, on the other hand, could not control her mirth. He was amazed at seeing her so merry and cheerful under such dreadful woes; while she, on her side, was equally astonished to see him weep at the sight of her miseries. After a brief interval of silent astonishment, the lady broke silence, and asked the Bishop the cause of his tears? He replied, "Because I feel quite overcome at seeing you reduced to this wretched state." And he added, "But now let me ask what is it that makes you laugh?" "Because," answered the lady, "I have good reason so to do. Were a prisoner confined in a strait prison by order of his sovereign, without chance of appeal, and doomed to stay in durance until his dungeon crumbled into ruins, would he not be glad to see the walls falling little by little? Undoubtedly; for he would then behold the near approach of the object of his earnest longing.

* Diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum. Rom. viij. 28.

Now this is just my case. My soul is confined in the body as in a narrow cell, and I behold the prison of my body wasting away in corruption. Hence my spirit exults at being brought ever nearer to the liberty of the children of God; this is it which overwhelms me with joy, because I know that I shall soon pass from a dungeon to a palace, from chains to a throne, and what is far more important, to the tender embrace of my Heavenly Spouse, Whose will has been fulfilled amid my many sufferings on earth, so that I am assured of enjoying His presence in Heaven." Such was the explanation which she gave of her joyfulness; and she continued to live contented and happy under her most painful infirmity.

272. "They," says St Augustine, "are indeed the sons of God, in whom nothing withstands the divine will, and who enjoy that stable peace in which the perfection of man consists."* Amongst these may be ranked the saintly lady spoken of above: such, too, we ought to be, if we desire to be perfect and happy in this life. Wherefore, if we do not find a sufficient motive of resignation to God's will in the utter subjection we owe Him as His creatures, and in the boundless claims he has to our love and compliance with His every wish, we should, at least, be urged to this submission by the love we bear to ourselves, our welfare, and true happiness. The Angels are blessed in heaven because they perfectly fulfil the will of God; and men are happy on earth in the proportion of their conformity with that divine will.

CHAPTER VI.

CERTAIN PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE FOREGOING MAXIMS.

273. In the preceding Chapters we have shown that God infinitely deserves that His will be done, by reason of His sovereign lovableness, and of His right to our submission, on account of

* In pace perfectio est, ubi nihil repugnat; et ideo filii Dei pacifici, quoniam nihil in his resistit Deo. Lib. i. de Serm. Dom., cap. 2.

His titles of our Maker, our Redeemer, our Father, and Friend. Whence it follows that we ought to do whatever God wills, not only in one or two points, but in every single thing He may ordain concerning us, since His claim and merit to have His will done holds good in all things without exception. This may also be gathered from what we have before said, namely, that our happiness here below depends on such conformity, since all that is required to mar our peace and happiness is to withdraw in any single point from the subjection due to the divine will. We must, therefore, strive to keep our will conformable to that of God in all things, in health and in sickness, in plenty and in want, in honour and in disgrace, in loss and in gain, in heat and in cold, in great things and small, in prosperity or adversity.

274. A fact, related by Thauler, and put on record by Father Nieremberg in his "Divine Life,"* may serve to lead us on to the practice of this complete conformity. A theologian, of vast erudition, but humble of heart, distrusting his learning, wished to meet with some servant of God well grounded in the school of perfection, who might guide him into the way of truth. After having craved this grace of God for eight whole years, he heard a voice which told him to go to the steps of the church, and that there he would find a man who would point out to him the path of truth. On hearing this, the Doctor at once arose, and hastened to the church porch, where he beheld a beggar, covered with rags, barefooted, with matted hair and wan countenance. The theologian began to question him, and, from the answers he received, discovered that the beggar-man was filled with heavenly wisdom, and that no better master was needed to lead him into the path for which he was making so earnest a search. The reader will share the same conviction if he follows the conversation which passed between the two.

275. Now, when the divine was about to leave the church, he said, "May God send you a happy day, Brother." The beggar replied, "I am obliged to you for your good wish; but I would have you know, that I never remember to have had a bad day, or a morning otherwise than good."

* Cap. 16.

276. *The Divine.*—"Be it so; and to the good days which you say you always have, may God add good fortune and much happiness."

The Beggar.—"You are wishing me very good things, and, no doubt, for the love of God; but be persuaded that I never was unfortunate, and have never met with any reverse."

277. *The Divine.*—"I pray God, dear Brother, that you may always be blessed with the same prosperous lot. But, to be candid, my mind does not as yet fully grasp the meaning of those brave words of yours."

The Beggar.—"Seeing you are astonished, I must let you know, that the happiness I have always enjoyed has not failed me up to the present moment."

278. *The Divine.*—"May God preserve you. But speak more plainly, for your meaning is still hidden from me."

The Beggar.—"I am quite ready, and even anxious, to make myself understood. But can you remember what and how many questions you have already put to me?"

279. *The Divine.*—"I remember quite well. I have asked three questions, putting them in three ways, by wishing you good day, good fortune, and much of happiness."

The Beggar.—"Do you recollect my answers?"

280. *The Divine.*—"They were these. You answered me that you never had an evil day; that you never were unfortunate; that happiness had never failed you. These are your three answers, which, I must own, I cannot understand; hence, I entreat you to explain them to me."

281. *The Beggar.*—"Know, then, Brother, that the days are good which we spend in the praises of God, Who grants us life for this very purpose, and that those days are unlucky on which we neglect to give to God the glory due to Him. Let the events, be they prosperous or adverse, which fall out in the course of the day, have their run; because, in all possible circumstances, we are able by God's grace, nay, it is our positive duty, to praise the Almighty by thorough submission of our own will to His, for this it is which, with the assistance of God's grace, makes our days good. As you perceive, I am a beggar, and destitute; I go about

wandering through the world, having no abode or place of shelter, and in my journeys I meet with all kinds of trials. Failing to find any one to give me an alms, I have to suffer the pangs of hunger; still I praise God. I am soaked through with rain, or am smitten with hail; yet I praise God. In a word, whatever adversity befalls me, I find therein a motive for praising God, and in this manner every day is a good one for me. Whether men do me a pleasure or displease me, I praise God for it, and keep my will in subjection to His Divine Majesty, giving Him the greatest praise for everything. For it is not adversity that makes our days evil, but rather the impatience which comes of not keeping our will in subordination to that of God, and occupied at all times in His praise."

282. *The Divine.*—"Indeed, Brother, you are right in what you say about good days. I now understand that good days are those we spend in praising God, whatever may supervene."

283. *The Beggar.*—"I said that I was never unlucky, that I have never met with a misfortune. This is true; for we all consider ourselves fortunate, when what happens to us is so good and desirable that we can wish for no more, and are unable to better ourselves. Now it is most certain, that what God sends us or disposes in our regard, is the best for us; whence it follows that, not only I myself, but every man who keeps the eyes of his soul open, and considers things as becomes a Christian, should look upon himself as fortunate in whatever God may send us, or ordain that men should do in our regard; for then nothing can take place which we shall not feel to be the best for us."

284. *The Divine.*—"There remains the third answer you made me, when you said that no day passes for you without happiness and bliss. This seems to me very hard to understand, but I feel sure that as it is no less important than the first two answers, you will be able to explain it as clearly as the foregoing."

285. *The Beggar.*—"I will do so, with God's help; but pay attention. By happiness, is commonly meant the state of one who has all he desires, who invariably has his own way, and whose will is accomplished without trouble. There is not a man in the world who, if he gets all he desires, does not attain true

happiness. Of this there can be no question. The blessed in Heaven possess this advantage; and the reason is, that they have no will beyond that of God. The same holds good with mortal men, as soon as they have mortified their lusts and inwardly submitted their will to that of God, so as to rejoice at what God does, both in their regard and in that of others. Such may well be called blessed upon earth, because they have a foretaste of heavenly joys, seeing that their will is done in all things, as it is in conformity with that of God." From this mendicant whose body was clothed in rags, but whose soul was adorned with sublime virtues, the reader may learn the art by which he may practically make all the days of his life good, prosperous, and happy: namely, in all the circumstances of his career, whether they are conformable to his liking or contrary to it, whether tasteful or distasteful, to submit his own will in all things to the holy will of God.

286. But it must here be borne in mind, that from such conformity nothing must be excluded, however slight and trivial it may appear to us. First, because though the matter in reference to which our rebellious will opposes that of God may seem to us very trifling, still it will suffice to keep our hearts in disquiet, and to deprive us of that constant happiness promised in the preceding Chapter, and which this fortunate mendicant experienced within himself. Secondly, the things, which by God's disposition are ordained to ensue, may be of little account, yet is it no slight evil to rebel against His will, and to withhold from Him due subjection. If a king makes known to a page, in any manner whatsoever, his will in a matter of but little moment,—thus, for instance, if he requests him to pick up a pin from the floor,—slight as the thing may be, it is unquestionable that the insubordination of the servant who withstands the command of his prince and refuses to obey, is by no means of little moment. Much less, then, can we make small account of a creature's refusal to submit to the King of Heaven, the Monarch of the World, though the matter in itself may seem of small moment.

287. And we should be the more careful in this point, since God not unfrequently visits in this life a slight transgression of

His Will with more severity than one of greater importance. Who would have supposed that God would exact from David, for his adultery and murder, no other penalty than the death of his infant son; while for a little vanity in the numbering his people, he was punished by the violent death of seventy thousand of his subjects? Who could have foreseen that God would have left unpunished in the High-priest Aaron, the scandalous compliance whereby he allowed the people to worship the golden calf, and helped them in carrying out so wicked a purpose; while, for a slight hesitation in striking the rock whence water was to flow, He would not allow his brother Moses to enter the land of promise? Who would not wonder at seeing that most pious king Josias, who had pulled down all the idol temples in his kingdom, pounded the images to dust, burnt the profane groves, and slaughtered the priests of those false gods, after having caused religion to flourish in the holy temple, and paid homage to the true God, to Whom he had turned with his whole heart and mind and all the powers of his soul, so that neither before nor after him was there found any king to equal him in his fidelity to the Law of Moses, as the Sacred Text bears record,*—who, I say, would not wonder at seeing him punished with an untimely death, for a little want of thought in not believing what was intimated to him, on the part of God, by a foreign and barbarian king?

288. On the other hand, we know that others have been munificently rewarded by God with most singular favours for some trifling good deeds performed in obedience to His will. If we credit ecclesiastical history, St Gregory the Great was raised to the Sovereign Pontificate for an alms repeatedly given to a beggar, who to all appearance was unduly importunate. Peter Telonarius, for a loaf given with but small grace to a poor man, attained not only salvation but holiness. God allows these and the like events to come about from time to time, that we may understand how generously He recompenses conformity to His will, even in slight matters; since, on its fulfilment, some great

* Similis illi non fuit ante eum rex, qui reverteretur ad Dominum in omni corde suo, et in totâ animâ suâ, et in universâ virtute suâ, juxta omnem legem Moysis, neque post eum surrexit similis illi. IV. Reg. xxiij. 25.

advantage of ours may depend, and our transgression of it may give rise to some great evil. Hence it is not enough to be resigned to the divine will in certain matters of moment, as, for instance, the loss of goods, health, reputation, or of our nearest and dearest friends and kinsfolk : but the like resignation is needed in the trifling events which daily take place, such as a biting word, a rudeness which offends ; the buzzing of a fly which teases us, or the barking of a dog that interrupts our sleep ; a stone in our path against which we stumble, a candle which suddenly goes out, an unexpected tear in our clothes ; or in the vicissitudes of the weather, which is either too rainy or too dry, too sultry, damp or frosty : and so of countless other things which are continually causing us annoyance. Resignation in these slight molestations is of no less importance than in those which are weightier, for the very reason that they are of hourly occurrence ; hence we can by their means acquire more easily and speedily that habit of conformity which will enable us to cling to the divine will in things more arduous and more difficult to be endured.

CHAPTER VII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO DIRECTORS ON THE PRESENT ARTICLE.

289. First suggestion.—On the good direction given by the ghostly father, may depend the formation in the penitent of this habit of conformity to the divine will, and, as a consequence, his attaining charity, which, in the main, consists in this conformity. When the Director finds that his penitent, having got rid of grievous sin, begins to feel some motions of love towards God, he should set him to this holy exercise, in order that from the love of feeling he may pass to a love that is solid, substantial, and practical. Wherefore the Confessor will advise the penitent to make frequent meditation on the motives developed above, in order to bend his will in subjection to that of God, especially in

what is trying to our weak nature. He will make the penitent adopt, as an ejaculation to be frequently repeated during the day, some passage of Scripture expressive of the desire of walking in conformity to God's will.* St Gertrude daily repeated three hundred and sixty-five times, these words : "Sweetest Jesus, *Not my will, but Thine be done.*" God Almighty taught that very spiritual man, Gregory Lopez, to make use of this prayer as an ejaculation : "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.*" He used to repeat these words every time he drew breath, that is, a countless number of times : and whenever he happened not to elicit these acts with due devotion, God allowed him to be assailed with violent temptations by the devil. From this pious practice, the penitent will soon find, that by these frequent aspirations after the fulfilment of God's will, he will keep alive this holy desire continually within his heart ; and that, in circumstances the most trying and repugnant to nature (which never fail us in this miserable life of ours), he will be prepared and ready to submit to the arrangements made by God.

290. Second suggestion.—The Director must exhort his penitent to join to this conformity great confidence in God, which predisposes to it, and renders it easy. I will explain my meaning. If a person who is sorely tried, whether by men or devils, or by the action of necessary causes, firmly believe that all is foreordained by God for our greater good, he will have a steadfast hope of a happy issue, and will abandon himself with confidence to the loving care of God. Hope being thus stirred up, it becomes easy to conform to God's will under hardships, even from the motive of the claim which God has to this submission, and of the subjection due to Him ; for this hope smooths down the repugnance of the soul, and predisposes us to this subjection. Hence, in all the events of life, be they most distasteful to nature, the devout person abides in calm, and his heart reposes on the divine appointments. According to that saying of holy David : *In peace in the self same, I will sleep, and I will rest : For Thou, O*

* Non mea, sed tua voluntas fiat. Non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu. Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in coelo, et in terra. Domine, quid me vis facere? In capite libri scriptum est de me, ut faciam voluntatem tuam, Deus meus volui.

*Lord, singularly hast settled me in hope.** On the other hand, a man who is deprived of this trust in Divine Providence, dreads, when afflicted and thwarted, an unfavourable issue for his trials; so that it is most difficult for him to resign himself to the will of God, nor is he likely to be resigned unless firmly grounded in virtue.

291. The story of Martin the monk, related by St Gregory Pope,† clearly proves what has just been asserted. This great servant of God had retired to the solitude of a mountain cave, where God, in proof of a singular care for him, had miraculously caused a spring of water to flow for the quenching of his thirst. But the devil, provoked at the holy life Martin led in this cavern apart from all conversation with men, began to molest him by frightful apparitions. As the saintly monk was at his prayers, the fiend appeared to him under the likeness of a venomous and hideous serpent, which sometimes sprang towards him as if about to devour him, and sometimes coiled round his feet or his body, in order to disturb him in his devout exercise. If the monk lay down to take the repose he needed, the serpent stretched itself at his side, in order to trouble his sleep. Such was, however, the conformity of Martin to the will of God, strengthened as it was by his conviction that this infernal serpent could do him no hurt, that he stretched out to the monster his hand or his foot, saying, "Bite me, if you dare; I shall not hinder you."‡ This diabolical obsession lasted three whole years. At length, worsted by such constancy, the hellish monster broke out one day into a dismal yell, and belching forth fire and flame, he cast himself headlong from the mountain-top, dragging in his fall the boulders and trees that were on the steep of the mountain. The holy Doctor concludes by observing to what sublime heights this man of God had reached, since for three whole years he had remained quiet and undaunted in the company of a monster from hell.§ Such is the power of con-

* In pace in idipsum dormiam, et requiescam: quoniam tu, Domine, singulariter in spe constituisti me. Psal. iv. 9.

† Dial., Lib. iij. cap. 16.

‡ Sed vir sanctus omnino imperterritus, ejus ori manum, vel pedem extendebat, dicens: Si licentiam accepisti ut ferias, ego non prohibeo.

§ Perpende, quæso, iste vir Domini, in quo mentis vertice stetit, qui cum serpente per triennium jacuit securus.

formity to the divine will, when strengthened and supported by a lively trust that God will protect us and bring our trials to a happy termination. The Director therefore must instruct his penitent how to behave under adversity, and encourage him to trust that God orders everything for his greater good. This confidence will smooth down the repugnances of nature, and help him to bend his will more readily to that of God, and to render it due submission.

292. Third suggestion.—It will greatly help to acquire this holy conformity if we accustom ourselves to perform every action, whether important or trifling, with the intention of pleasing God, taking invariably, as the motive of our actions, God's good pleasure and the fulfilment of His holy will; for by thus training ourselves to seek alone the good pleasure of the Almighty in works which are left to our discretion, we dispose ourselves to seek it likewise in those things which are not left to our free choice, but are permitted by God to happen contrary to our tastes and natural leanings. And, indeed, by seeking God's will in works of supererogation, we shall find it easier to comply with His permissive will, and shall have much less repugnance in bowing to the divine decrees when declared to us by plain command. But it must be remembered that in order to bring about the aforesaid effect an upright and virtuous purpose in our actions should be pure, in such wise as that nothing else be sought in all we do but God's good pleasure; and this purity of intention should be frequently renewed, lest it be defiled by other motives which are human and worldly.

293. Fourth suggestion.—The Director must lead souls by slow degrees to perfect conformity, making them rise step by step until they attain to that which is highest and most perfect. He will begin by engaging persons to accept their trials at God's hands with patience. The Abbot Pœmen used often to exclaim "Who am I that I should set my will and judgment before that of God?" This is an excellent way of subjecting in patience our own will to that of God, placing, as it does, the two in contrast and suggesting the unbounded presumption implied in the pretension that the will of a vile creature should prevail over that of the

Sovereign Ruler, who is God. He will next excite them to pass through their trials with gladness and satisfaction. St Ludwina, amid her painful infirmities, often cried out, "Lord, it is most pleasing to me that Thou spare me not, nor withhold Thy hand in overwhelming me with suffering, for my greatest comfort is that Thy will be done in me." The Blessed Charles Spinola, of the Society of Jesus, who was burned at a slow fire in homage to our holy faith, expresses himself in one of his letters, as follows: "If we are unable to suffer hardships, it is at least a great pleasure to think of those who suffer them, and to be kindled by their flames. When, oh when, will that hour and moment come! What sweetness in the very thought of suffering torments for Christ! what then will it not be to die for His sake!" This degree of conformity is the more arduous because it is most contrary to the instincts of nature; and yet by the increase of divine love, which spreads its flame more and more within the soul, we gain strength to mount to this height of perfection. Thirdly, the Director must endeavour to raise this conformity to such a pitch, that bodily ills be counted as great benefits, so that we give God hearty thanks for them, as if they were His choicest favours. Such was the conduct of holy Job.* This model of patience excited himself to receive cheerfully at God's hands the fearful blows wherewith the devil scourged him, by the thought that he had also received temporal blessings from the Lord. A token that he made greater account of the misfortunes than of the favours that came to him from the hand of God; otherwise his argument would have been without point. This degree of the virtue is the peculiar property of the perfect; nevertheless we must not lose heart, as any one may attain it with the help of God's grace. The Director, then, must not forget that whatever degree of conformity his penitent aspires to, he must necessarily ask it most earnestly of our Lord; for if the acquirement of any virtue demands persevering and fervent prayer, much more will it be needed for the attainment of complete conformity with God's will, since this is the very queen of virtues. Therefore he will tell the penitent who is desirous of

* Si bona suscepimus de manu Domini, mala quare non suscipiemus? Job. ij. 12.

union with the divine will, frequently to cry out to God, *Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.**

294. Fifth suggestion.—The Director will meet with spiritual persons who know how to resign themselves to the will of God in temporal ills, that is, in the loss of health, of goods, or of honour; but he will find very few devout persons who are fully resigned when deprived of sensible consolation, that is, who are in dryness and spiritual desolation. Wherefore he must convince them that these visitations also come from God, so that they are to be resigned in them as in every other trial and, humbling themselves, rest in peace. They will reply that this spiritual dryness is the result of their own shortcomings. He need not contradict them, but should not fail to assure them at once that they should accept this chastisement with calm and resignation, and humble themselves in God's sight, since they acknowledge their guilt. Would it not be a silly excuse if a sinner, when punished by God for his incontinence, were to refuse submission to His will on the ground that his punishment was richly deserved? No less foolish is the excuse of those spiritual persons who, while acknowledging that their dryness has been deserved, lose peace of mind and accept it not at God's hands. They will urge that their dryness is not medicinal, but a mere cooling down and relaxation of fervour. He must teach them to distinguish two kinds of coldness, one which affects the feelings, while the other resides in the will. The first kind of coldness it is not in their power to remove, nor is it displeasing to God; the second kind is displeasing to God, but it rests with them to remedy it. They have, then, but to get rid of this latter dryness by applying themselves to serve God in real earnest; while, when suffering from aridity which is merely in the feelings, they must take comfort and possess their souls in peace.

295. Sixth suggestion.—God tries certain persons with dryness in the higher faculties of the spirit. They are deprived of light; they feel a difficulty, when at prayer, in eliciting with their will affections and resolutions; nor can they, without a strain, lift up their hearts to God. Even in this case they must be resigned, in the belief (which is well founded) that God orders this, too, for

* Psal. xlij. 10.

their good and advantage. At times they will consider themselves unable to make even these acts of conformity; but they mistake, as faith is not wanting to them, by means of which the will can always bestir itself by acts which are dry and unaccompanied by feeling, but lead to a due submission. And when they seem to themselves to be reduced to utter incapacity, they may then proceed in a negative manner, that is, they may annihilate themselves in God's sight, confessing their own weakness and misery, and leaving God to do as He pleases. But, above all, they must not be disquieted; for trouble is a sure sign that the soul does not bow down in humble submission to the decrees of God.

ARTICLE V.

CHAPTER I.

EXPLANATION OF THE COMMANDMENT TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOUR. CONSIDERATION OF THE CHARACTER OF THIS COMMANDMENT, WITH A VIEW TO STIR UP OUR AFFECTION TOWARDS IT.

296. It is needless to repeat what we have quoted above from St Thomas, namely, that the Love of our Neighbour enters as a secondary part into the essence of Christian perfection. It will be sufficient to explain the reason why the charity by which we love our brethren is so worthy of esteem as to constitute in great part the lustre and perfection of our soul. This appreciation of the virtue is, unless I err, founded upon the great esteem in which charity towards our neighbour is held by God; both because He has made it the subject-matter of a binding and rigorous commandment and, also, because He gave that commandment at a time we have so much cause to remember.

297. Before, however, entering upon the examination of the

singular qualities of the commandment to love our neighbour—by the very giving of which God has shown its excellence—it must be noticed that the love of which we are now speaking is not that by which we love our neighbour on account of a certain conformity of taste, or similarity of character, or of any natural gifts whatever displayed by our fellow-men. This is a love of low degree, valueless for the acquirement of everlasting goods, since it is wholly founded on natural inclination. Charity is that love of our neighbour which takes its rise in the love of God, as by means of this virtue we love our neighbour not for his own sake, nor for his natural excellence, but solely with reference to God. "Let no one," says St Gregory, "who loves another, jump at the conclusion that he has charity; for if he love not his neighbour for the sake of God, he may imagine himself possessed of charity, while in reality he is without it."* St Bernard, in like manner, dealing with this subject, says that for the love of our neighbour to be perfect, that is, supernatural, it must spring from the love of God; in other words, we must love our neighbour in God. But this we cannot do unless we first love God, and then love our neighbour for this love of God.†

298. This being presupposed, I say that nothing proves so indisputably the excellence of charity towards our neighbour, and the strict obligation we lie under to practise it, as the strict, rigorous, express, and memorable commandment given by God upon this matter. Let us view it under its several circumstances. To begin; the commandment is most strict, since our Lord imposes it as the chief and greatest of all; as the sum and substance of the whole Law; as a compendium of all the lessons left us by the Prophets; as the summary of all perfection. He has expressed Himself to this effect in St Matthew: "Love your neighbour, so as

* Nemo cum quempiam diligit, habere se protinus caritatem putet, nisi prius ipsam vim suæ dilectionis examinet. Nam si quis quemlibet amat, sed propter Deum non amat, caritatem non habet, sed habere se putat. Hom. 38, in Evang.

† Ut perfecta justitia sit diligere proximum, Deum in causâ habere necesse est: alioquin proximum pure diligere quomodo potest, qui in Deo non diligit? Porro in Deo diligere non potest, qui Deum non diligit. Oportet ergo Deum diligi prius, ut in Deo diligi possit et proximus. De Dilig. Deum,

to do to him whatever you would have done to yourself. This is the whole pith of the Law, and the whole teaching of the Prophets."* And in another text Christ says still more plainly: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second commandment is like unto the first: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments* (as on the fundamental groundwork of our religion) *hang all the law and the prophets.*† If, then, this commandment is the chief of all, whence all the others derive their binding force, it must needs follow that of all the precepts which God has laid upon us, this is the most binding.

299. Secondly, it is a most rigorous precept, because it is sanctioned by the penalty of death, which is immediately incurred. *He who loves not* (his neighbour), says St John, *abides in death.*‡ And St Augustine adds, that such a one is dead, not only because he is stricken with the wound of a grievous sin, but because the root of every sin is implanted in his heart.§ Whence it follows that as a dead man is incapable of any vital act, so a man devoid of charity is incapable of any action that is holy and deserving of life everlasting. Sacrifice itself, though an act of religious worship, fails to find acceptance with God, if offered by those who are deprived of charity. And consequently Christ gives the warning, *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*‖ Else the offering pre-

* Omnia quæcumque vultis ut faciant vobis homines, et vos facite illis. Hoc est enim lex et prophetæ. Matth. vij. 12.

† Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, et in totâ animâ tuâ, et in totâ mente tuâ. Hoc est maximum et primum mandatum. Secundum autem simile est huic: Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum. In his duobus mandatis universa lex pendet, et prophetæ. Matth. xx. 37, *et seq.*

‡ Qui non diligit, manet in morte. I. Joan. iij. 14.

§ Hæc si non tenetur (nempe caritas) et grave peccatum est, et radix omnium peccatorum. Tract. iv. in I. Joan. iij.

‖ Si offers munus tuum ad altare, et ibi recordatus fueris, quia frater tuus habet aliquid adversum te; relinque ibi munus tuum ante altare, et vade prius reconciliari fratri tuo. Matth. v. 23.

sented to God by a soul dead and reduced to the state of a corpse by violation of holy charity, will not be accepted of God. For, in truth, the sacrifice of charity is more pleasing in God's sight than any other victim or whole burnt-offering; according to the saying of the Scribe, approved by our Redeemer in the twelfth Chapter of St Mark: *To love one's neighbour as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices. And Jesus, seeing that he had answered wisely, said to him: Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.**

300. Here I cannot help referring to a miraculous occurrence related by Thomas à Kempis. A young man, being at Mass, could not see the Sacred Host. He fancied that this arose from the weakness of his eyes, or from the distance at which he stood from the altar. He therefore drew nearer, and came close to the Celebrant. In spite of this, his endeavours were fruitless; he was unable, however near he approached, to see the Sacred Host in the hands of the priest. This marvellous state of things lasted full two years, after which time he felt a great scruple, and went some distance on foot to seek the advice of a discreet and learned priest, to whom he disclosed in Confession this strange event. The Confessor, after a searching examination, discovered that his penitent bore hatred to a neighbour, and that during all this time, he had refused to be reconciled to him. "My Son," he said, "I now see you foster within you obstinate rancour against your neighbour, and this is why the Sacred Host is hidden from your eyes; for, being devoid of charity, Christ would give you to understand by this prodigy that you have no part in His Sacrifice, in spite of your bodily presence." The youth repented, and from his heart pardoned his enemy, promising to seek no further vengeance. The Confessor, seeing him in such good disposition, gave him absolution. On leaving the sacred tribunal, the penitent went forthwith to Mass, where, like everybody else, he saw the Sacred Host in the hands of the priest. Thus would our Saviour witness to him and to us, the truth, that it is useless

* Diligere proximum tamquam se ipsum majus est omnibus holocautomatibus, et sacrificiis Jesus autem, videns quod sapienter respondisset, ait illi: Non es longe a regno Dei. Marc. xij. 33, 34.

for us to approach the altar, whether to say Mass, or to share in the benefits of the Holy Sacrifice, unless we first, by a sincere and hearty reconciliation, recover the charity we have lost; for God makes more account of this than of oblations, gifts, and sacrifice.*

301. What has been said of sacrifice applies to every other good work, which cannot be holy unless accompanied by charity; for St Gregory is no less of opinion that this is the root of every good deed in the supernatural order, than St Augustine, who beholds in the privation of charity the root of all evil. In explanation of his view, he likens good works to the branches of a budding tree, and says, that as these spring from the root, so do our good works spring from charity; and even as the branches cut off from the root lose their sap and wither away, so do good works when separated from charity lose all merit and become fruitless for life eternal.† I am aware that the holy Doctor is speaking principally of charity towards God; but as the habit of the love of God is not distinct from the love of our neighbour, his argument has full force as applied in this place. The reader may hereby perceive how rigorously God commands us to love our neighbour; seeing that from transgressing this precept, there results to the soul so fatal a death as to render it incapable of any act deserving of everlasting bliss.

302. Thirdly.—It is an express commandment, and laid upon us in most explicit terms by the Divine Lawgiver. For assuredly these words of our Saviour, *This is my commandment, that ye love one another*;‡ are worthy of most special attention. But stay: are there not as many commandments of God as there are precepts in the Decalogue? are not the several prescriptions the Church promulgates by the authority given her by God, so many commandments, at least mediately divine? How, then, can Christ call the love of our neighbour His sole commandment? The reason is obvious; it is that He has it,

* Diligere proximum majus est omnibus sacrificiis.

† Ut enim multi arboris rami ex unâ radice prodeunt, sic multæ virtutes ex unâ caritate generantur. Nec habet aliquid viriditatis ramus boni operis, si non permaneat in radice caritatis. Hom. 27, in Evang.

‡ Hoc est præceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem. Joan. xv. 12.

especially at heart, and insists most particularly on its fulfilment. This manner of speaking is such as a prince might make use of, were he to declare that his prerogative is to do favours, that his glory is to pardon. Not that he would mean to imply by this language that he is not possessed of the other virtues, but only that charity is the most valued and the most cherished of them all. So, too, our Lord would give us to understand by this declaration, that of all the commandments, He makes the greatest account of this, and is most anxious for its observance.

303. We must further lay especial stress on another expression our Redeemer makes use of to His disciples when speaking of brotherly love: *By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.** Christ has dealt with us as persons of rank do with their household, whom they clothe in their livery, so that all may perceive who belongs to their service. Thus has our Saviour willed that love to our neighbour should be the mark whereby we are to be distinguished from pagans, unbelievers and barbarians, and to be acknowledged of all as His followers. So that if we are despoiled of charity, which He has taken as the livery and distinguishing mark of His servants, He no longer owns us as Christians, nor would have us be held as such by others. Hence St Chrysostom might well say, that many are the marks of a Christian, but that the least equivocal of them is the fraternal bond of a sincere charity.† This is indeed strong language.

304. But what follows is stronger still. Christ, wishing to incite us to this brotherly love, declares that whatever good or evil we do to our neighbour, He will take as done to Himself.‡ Hereupon St Cyprian exclaims in amazement, "How could Christ impel us more effectually to compassion, to pity, to the love of our neighbour in his need, than by declaring that whatever service we do to others shall be accounted as done to God, Who binds Him-

* In hoc cognoscent omnes quod discipuli mei estis, si dilectionem habueritis ad invicem. Joan. xiij. 35.

† Plurima quidem sunt, quae formam Christianitatis exprimunt; sed plus omnibus et melius, mutuæ caritatis affectus. Hom. 51, in Epist. ad Hebr.

‡ Amen, dico vobis, quamdiu fecistis uni ex his fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis. Matth. xxv. 40.

self to give us the reward thereof?"* What honours and what homage are paid to the ambassadors of a king! What respect is shown them by all who are well affected to the crown, merely because these envoys represent the person of their sovereign! What, then, ought not to be the respect and love we should bear to our neighbour, who represents the person of Christ, being assured, as we are, that our treatment of him will be taken by our Lord as done to His own person? "Do not, then, regret," writes St Augustine, "that you were not born in the happy age when Christ was dwelling on earth, clad in our mortal flesh; complain not that you have been debarred from seeing Him with your eyes, from receiving Him into your house, from waiting upon Him in your abode, and from conversing familiarly with Him; for He has not deprived you of the dignity and honour of rendering Him all the services and love you desire, by doing to your neighbour whatever you would have wished to do to Him."†

305. Our Blessed Lord was pleased to make this Gospel truth palpable to the French bishop, whose heroic charity is recorded by Cæsarius.‡ He was young in years, but mature in virtue, and so full of the love of his neighbour that he could not behold the sufferings of others without being moved to tender pity, and affording them ready relief. While on a journey, he fell in with a most loathsome leper, who was lying in a field close to the high-road, and imploring help in mournful tones. The good bishop at once dismounted from his horse, and putting his hand into his pocket gave the man forthwith an abundant alms. The leper exclaimed, "I have no need of your money." "What, then, would you have from me?" asked the prelate in reply. "I want you to wipe my face, and to cleanse it of the matter which is dropping

* Quomodo magis potuit Christus justitiæ, et misericordiæ nostræ operam provocare, quam quod præstari dixit sibi, quidquid egenti præstatur? De Eleem., circa finem.

† Ne quis vestrum forsitan dicat: O beati qui Christum in domum suam meruerunt accipere! noli dolere, noli murmurare, quia temporibus natus es quando jam Dominum non vides in carne. Non tibi abstulit istam dignationem. *Cum uni*, inquit, *ex minimis meis fecistis, mihi fecistis.* Serm. 26, de Verb. Dom.

‡ Lib. viij. cap. 32.

from my forehead, cheeks, and nostrils." The bishop began at once gently to rub off with his finger the putrid humour. But soon the leper cried out, "Hold! hold! I cannot bear the roughness of your finger." The prelate then began to wipe the poor man's face with a soft handkerchief which he had by him. But the leper repeated his outcry, "Stop, I cannot bear the coarseness of that cloth." Astonished at so much delicacy, the bishop said, "Son, if you are unable to bear the touch of my hand and of this soft handkerchief, with what would you have me cleanse your face from this foul discharge?" "With your tongue," was the answer; "it is the only touch I can bear." At so strange a request the heart of the prelate was agitated by conflicting emotions. Grace and nature struggled together within him; grace urging him, by its holy inspirations, to so heroic an act, from which nature strove to deter him by a shrinking of supreme disgust. Grace at length prevailed, and, doing great violence to himself, he drew nigh to the loathsome countenance, and applied his tongue to it. When, behold, instead of a filthy discharge, a gem of inestimable value was inserted within his lips; and, the leper being none other but Jesus Christ, our Lord assumed before his very eyes the form of a most comely youth. In an instant the sores and the filth of that countenance gave place to the most ravishing features, the deformity of frame was succeeded by a beauty more than human, and the loathsomeness of that infected body was changed into a fragrance of Paradise. Then the saintly bishop beheld Christ ascend in glory to Heaven, and heard the promise, that one day, in reward of his charity, he would be called to a share of the glory he was witnessing. This good bishop knew full well that a service rendered to the lowest and meanest of our neighbours is rendered to our Blessed Saviour, for he had often read this in the holy Gospel.* But in this instance, Christ would have him touch, so to say, with his own hands, and see with his own eyes, what he held, without seeing, by faith. But we, who are unworthy of the like extraordinary favours, may rest content with knowing for a certainty, that although Christ is not personally present in our neighbour, we should conceive a true brotherly

* Quod uni ex minimis meis fecistis, mihi fecistis.

Love for our fellows, since Jesus abides in them morally, inasmuch as all the services we render our neighbour have Jesus for their object, and all the harm we do our neighbour strikes at Jesus Himself.

306. To the rigour of this commandment of charity, to the emphatic expressions with which our Saviour has inculcated it upon us, may be added the most memorable time which He chose for its more clear promulgation. It was on the very last day of His career, when He was on the point of laying down His mortal life in order to beget us to an immortal life. On that day, to Him so fatal, and to us so memorable, when addressing His last discourse to the disciples, the only legacy He left, both to them and to us, was a hearty and sincere love of our neighbour. *A new commandment do I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you.** He calls it new, though ofttimes repeated, because its renewal, under such circumstances, was to communicate fresh vigour and greater force to persuade us to a sincere and brotherly affection. Then He repeats the command again, saying, *This is my precept, that ye love one another even as I have loved you.*† He calls it His own precept; to the effect that it might be more deeply graven on our hearts, as being the dying request of a loving Father. And not content with having twice expressed His most earnest will, He returns to it once more, saying, "Recollect, dear disciples, that it is I who command you with full authority. *These things do I command you, that you love one another.*"‡ Lastly, in the prayer which that very night He made aloud to His Eternal Father, He asks that His disciples may maintain among themselves such perfect charity, that in their many bodies there might be one only heart.§

307. I may now be allowed to set forth a most touching fancy of St Augustine, which occurs to me very opportunely. Figure to yourself that you behold a good father lying on his deathbed,

* Mandatum novum do vobis, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos Joan. xiij. 34.

† Hoc est præceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos. Ibid. xv. 12.

‡ Hæc mando vobis, ut diligatis invicem. Ibid. xv. 17.

§ Ut omnes unum sint, sicut tu, Pater, in me, et ego in te. Ibid. xvij. 21.

surrounded by his weeping children. He draws up his will, leaving them the heirs of all he possesses, and finally he makes known to them his desires, recommends his last wishes to them repeatedly, and several times urges their performance. His agony then follows, and he dies. As the holy Doctor remarks, these last words of their dying parent cannot fail to make a deep and enduring impression on the minds and hearts of his sons and heirs.* And were it to happen that some reluctance should arise within them to fulfil the dying request, they would reproach themselves, saying, "What, then, shall we not do what our beloved father so earnestly recommended to us at the very time that he was dying? Shall we neglect to carry out the last injunction of his expiring tongue? † Ah! brethren," continues the Saint, "for God's sake call to mind, with the feelings and hearts of Christians, that if a son and heir take such delight in, and set so much store by, the words of a dying parent, what power should not have the dying commands of our Father and Saviour Jesus Christ?"‡

308. We may further observe, that the last words and dying commands of our most loving Father Jesus Christ, were not only most urgent in inculcating upon us brotherly love, but, more than this, the example He set us during the last moments of His life, is more efficacious than all other motives. Hanging on the cross, Christ pardoned the thief who had outraged Him by every kind of crime, craving forgiveness of His Eternal Father for those who, even then, were insulting Him, jeering at Him, and occupied in putting him to death.§ How, then, can we pretend to be the children of so illustrious a Parent, if we forget His last most earnest entreaties, and most noble examples, and if we exercise not towards each other perfect charity? Now to sum up in a few words what has been set forth at full length, I will say this, that if the commandment which God has given us to love one

* Hæredes illius quomodo meminerint ultima verba morientis!

† Ergo non faciam, quod mihi pater meus efflans animam novissime mandavit? quod ultimum sonuit in aures meas, proficiscente hinc patre meo?

‡ Fratres, cogitate visceribus Christianis, si hæredibus sunt tam dulcia, tam grata, et tanti ponderis verba patris ituri ad sepulcrum, hæredibus Christi qualia debent esse verba novissima? In I. Joan. Tract. x.

§ Pater, ignosce illis.

another be so strict, so binding, so explicit, so memorable, we must perforce acknowledge, that of all the virtues it is the noblest and the most excellent, since God, Who alone makes a just estimate of all things, holds this virtue in higher esteem than any other. But if God and His Divine Son have charity so much at heart, it follows, that he who makes slight account of it, and strives not with all care and endeavour to attain it, is not God's servant, is not Christ's disciple; in a word, is not a true Christian.

CHAPTER II.

THAT LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR IS A VIRTUE WHICH ENSURES OUR EVERLASTING SALVATION.

309. If the high esteem God has of brotherly love, and the great rigour wherewith He commands us to practise it, be considered motives insufficient to make us desire this virtue, and to persuade us ever to bear it in our heart (by means of a sincere affection for our neighbour), and in our hands (by deeds of kindness towards him), we ought to be led to the love and practice of this charity by our own interest, seeing that the Holy Scriptures warrant us in believing that no virtue has equal force to ensure our everlasting salvation.

310. If we were to light upon a balm of such healing power as not only to be a specific against every actual infirmity, but also to be a preventive against all future maladies, so that no human body, once anointed with this saving mixture, could ever again be seized with sickness, who would not seek out so efficacious a medicine, capable alike of healing diseases already contracted, and of preserving us from future attacks? Who would not undergo severe toil, undertake long journeys, and spend his last farthing for the attainment of a medicine that could bestow unfailing life? Now, such a balsam as this is the love of our neighbour which, if practised even by a sinner, will, by the help of God's grace, earn for

him abundant aids to recover his health by wholesome penance, will preserve him from the like ills for the future, and bring him to a life of never-ending bliss. The Prince of the Apostles says, that for a person sinking under deadly wounds of grievous sins committed in his past life, it is sufficient to apply the priceless balsam of brotherly love, in order to bring it, as we have just now explained it, to perfect health.* Charity, he writes, *covereth a multitude of sins.* And here pay attention to the words *a multitude of sins*, by which is signified that the precious liquor of charity, dropping from our hearts, has power not only to bring on the recovery of one that is mortally wounded by grievous sin, but even of one who is, so to speak, already putrefying by the great multitude of his deadly crimes. Nor is this prodigious efficacy of brotherly love to be ascribed to it only when used in its most special meaning; the same holds good of any one of the subordinate acts of the virtue, as, for instance, alms-deeds, which, as the Archangel told Tobias, *deliver from death, and purge away all sins, and obtain mercy.*† And our Lord, addressing the Pharisees, said to them, *Give alms of such things as ye have; and behold, all things are clean unto you.*‡ In a word, as water by the conflict of its properties with raging fire quenches, and thus destroys it, making the flame as though it were not; so alms-deeds, by opposing to the malice of sin their atoning efficacy, free the soul from the stain of guilt, and bring it back to a perfect cleanness; according to the teaching of the Book of Ecclesiasticus.§

311. Moreover, charity is a balsam that preserves us from all sin, since it strengthens, fortifies, and invigorates the soul, and renders it safe from the mortal attacks of all and every crime. St Paul gives the reason when he says, *He that loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law*,‖ entirely satisfying every precept. Wherefore, if it be

* Caritas operit multitudinem peccatorum. 1 Pet. iv. 8.

† Eleemosyna a morte liberat, et ipsa est quæ purgat peccata, et facit invenire misericordiam. Tob. xij. 9.

‡ Date eleemosynam, et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis. Luc. xj. 41.

§ Ignem ardentem extinguit aqua, et eleemosyna resistit peccatis. Ecclus. iij. 33.

‖ Qui diligit proximum, legem implevit . . . Plenitudo legis est dilectio, Rom. xiij. 8.

enough, in order to keep from the breaking God's commandments, to love our neighbour, it is plain that charity is an all sufficient preventive against deadly sin.

312. But if it be true that charity frees the person who cherishes it from past guilt, and ensures him against future falls, who can doubt that we shall possess the greatest possible assurance of securing eternal salvation by abiding in love? It is indisputable that Christ Himself, with His own lips, gave this very surety to the lawyer who accosted Him during conversation with His disciples, with the question: *Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?** Our Lord asked him what was written in the Law. He replied that *we are to love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves.* "Well answered," said our Blessed Saviour, "*this do, and thou shalt live.*† If the reader asks the reason why charity is thus able to deliver our souls from the death of sin and to beget them anew to immortality in bliss, I refer him for the answer to the beloved disciple. *If we love one another*, he writes, *God abides in us*, namely, by His grace; for by loving, we are loved of Him in return,‡ *and by abiding in love, we abide in God, and He in us.*§ How then, can it be possible for one remaining in possession of this holy love, to fall a prey to the terrible death of sin or damnation, living, as such a one does, in constant union with the True and Everlasting Life, which is God, nay, living one and the same life with God? Surely no more powerful motive for making us highly prize charity to our neighbour, and for keeping it ever rooted in our inmost heart, can be brought before our mind, than the certain knowledge that we cannot perish so long as this virtue abides within us.

313. We may be greatly encouraged to the practice of charity by the example of a certain worldling, who was as wicked as wealthy, and who, in the very midst of the sea of his crimes, by keeping a tight hold of the sure plank of brotherly love, reached

* Magister, quid faciendo vitam æternam possidebo? Luc. x. 25.
† Hoc fac, et vives.
‡ Si diligamus invicem, Deus in nobis manet. I. Joan. iv. 12.
§ Qui manet in caritate, in Deo manet, et Deus in eo. I. Joan. iv.

happily the haven of eternal bliss.* He had married a woman quite his opposite in manners, for she feared God and was given to all the works of piety. The good lady used constantly to receive as her guests, and entertain with great charity, all the Religious who came to her from distant countries. Once, while some of these were at table taking refreshment, the pious lady asked them to afford her a little spiritual nourishment, by discoursing upon some devout matter. Her husband, who was present, said, "I, too, will listen to the pious conversation, provided it be short, for I find long homilies wearisome and annoying." "The discourse," replied one of the Religious, "shall be as short as possible," and after quoting the words of Tobias: *See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another*,† he confined himself to a brief enumeration of certain cases of ordinary occurrence, to which this precept applies. The worldling, being powerfully moved by divine grace, was so smitten at heart by the instruction, that he promised forthwith to reduce it to practice, at whatever cost. And on looking into himself, he found that he had hitherto acted far differently, for by an abuse of power he had robbed one man of his house, another of his field, and had outraged many by word and deed; but now repenting of his errors, he made a public declaration that all whom he had wronged in person, in property, or reputation, were to put in their claims, and he would give due compensation. And, in effect, like another Zacheus in his contrition, he made ample and abundant restitution, so as fully to compensate for all the injuries he had done his neighbour.

314. In the meanwhile, as he was one day out hunting, accompanied by his servants, he met on his way a poor miller, who was in great grief and almost in despair, because the waters of a neighbouring stream, being swollen by the rains, threatened to sweep away his mill, without his being able to save it from imminent destruction. He at once bethought him of the lesson of charity he had received from the good Religious, and said to himself that were he to be placed in the like woful plight, he

* Ungarus Minorita, in Expos. Symbol. Serm. 70.

† Quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris. Tobias, iv. 16.

should wish others to give him help. He therefore determined to go to the rescue of the poor fellow. At once he dismounted, and made his servants do likewise, and by working all together, they had so much success that they turned the waters of the stream and put the house of the poor man out of all danger. On mounting again, this gentleman met with a poor traveller, barefooted, ragged, and in great need of refreshment; forthwith the thought struck him, Were I in such straits would not I wish to have food and rest? It behoves me, then, to solace and give relief to this poor creature. So he took him to his own house, recruited him with a plentiful meal, put him into a soft bed, and then, wearied out with his day's work, retired to rest. In the middle of the night the poor man began to cry out that he was athirst, and felt ready to die of the parching heat. Roused by this outcry, the gentleman got up, in accordance with his usual charitable practice and, regardless of his own inconvenience, went to the cistern to draw some fresh water to quench the poor man's thirst withal. But, as in drawing the water, he leaned forward too far on the brink of the tank, he fell in and was drowned. The grief and mourning of his household, at so untoward and fatal an event, is more easily imagined than described. When the corpse was taken out of the cistern, a gold collar was found encircling the neck: it bore this inscription, graven doubtless by Angelic hands: "We Angels have borne the soul of this just man up to heaven, ere yet his body has grown cold in the water of the tank, because he met his death in a work of charity." The circlet was of one whole piece, without any joint, nor could it be taken off the neck of the deceased. The Bishop was summoned, and after examining into this miraculous event, had it published everywhere to the glory of brotherly love. The reader may see hereby how right I was in saying that the love of our neighbour is a balsam of Paradise, since it can thus heal so speedily, in an abandoned sinner, the festering wounds of many grievous crimes, ensure his salvation, and bring him so soon to the possession of life everlasting.

CHAPTER III.

THE ACTS OF CHARITY WE SHOULD PRACTISE TOWARDS PARTICULAR INDIVIDUALS: AND, FIRST, TOWARDS OUR ENEMIES.

315. We now proceed to speak of those acts of charity that ought to be practised, in particular, with various classes of individuals, according to their needs or their failings. I will give the first place to the love of our enemies, as being of all acts of charity the most difficult, and beyond question the most worthy, in that it likens us to God, and renders us most conformable to the Son of God, made Man for love of us. It is certain that nothing is so characteristic of the divine goodness as to pardon outrages, and to show mercy to sinners, as Holy Church teaches us in her liturgy.* Nor is God content to cast an eye of pity on them that offend Him. He puts forth all His beneficence, no less on behalf of the wicked than of the just. *He makes His sun to rise on the good and the bad*, and dispenses to both His benign influences. He makes refreshing rains to fall alike on the innocent and on the guilty, in order that for the latter, no less than for the former, the earth may bear harvests of corn and wine, of fruits and herbage, and may produce animals and every other creature useful to man.†

316. David, with a view to show favour to all that were of the race of Saul, that implacable persecutor who had repeatedly attempted his life, said, *Tell me, Is there any one of the house of Saul left behind, that I may show him the mercy of God?*‡ Why, we may ask, does David, when expressing his desire to deal mercifully with the descendants of the treacherous king, speak of the *mercy of God?* Could he not have said the mercy of the righteous, of saints, of perfect people? No, he must

* Deus qui omnipotentiam tuam parcendo maxime, et miserando manifestas.

† Qui solem suum oriri facit super bonos et malos, et pluit super justos et injustos. Matth. v. 35.

‡ Numquid superest aliquis de domo Saul, ut faciam cum eo misericordiam Dei? II. Reg. ix. 3.

needs call it the *mercy of God;* because to pardon our enemies from our heart, is to show them a favour which properly belongs to God alone. "What," asks St Gregory of Nyssa," is the conduct of the man whose heart is kindly and lovingly disposed towards his enemies? It is that of one who lifts himself above human nature, and makes himself like unto God; for in forgiving his enemies, and doing good to those that persecute him, he does that which belongs peculiarly to God Himself."* St John Chrysostom, in accordance with this view of the Doctor of Nyssa, says, "We may, so to speak, liken him that loves his enemies to the Pure and Uncreated Being, on account of the innocence of his life, the purity of his conversation, and the exercise of the other virtues; but by no one virtue can we so liken ourselves to God, as by loving them that hate us, and by doing good to them that injure us." †

317. Who does not know the law of friendship, that the friend should resemble his friend; and the law of nature, that the child should be like his parent, in temperament, features, condition, and rank? "Wherefore," observes St Augustine, "it is in our power to make ourselves like unto God; for by loving our enemies, we shall be raised, not only to the honour of being the friends of the Almighty, but to the still more eminent dignity of being His true sons; according to the assurance of Christ, that by loving them who hate us, we become the children of our Father who is in Heaven." ‡ Were you to know that a man of the world, illustrious by birth and wealth, wanted to adopt you for his son, how many bitter reproaches would you not cheerfully put up with, what insults would you not willingly suffer, to attain the coveted prize of being his son, and of having a claim to his rich inheritance? What offences, then, should you not endure,

* Non amplius intra terminos humanæ naturæ conspicitur; sed ipsi Deo per virtutem assimilatur, ut alius esse Deus videatur, dum facit ea quæ Dei solius est facere. Orat. v., De Orat. Dom.

† Nihil est, quod sic Deo similes faciat, ut malignis atque lædentibus esse placabilem. Hom. 20 in Matth.

‡ Qui ergo dilexerit inimicos suos, illud in eo completum erit, quod Dominus dixit: *Diligite inimicos vestros, ut sitis filii patris vestri, qui in cœlis est.* Elige modo quod tibi placuerit. Si inimicos dilexeris, non solum amicus, sed etiam filius Dei esse mereberis. De Sanctis, Serm. 37.

what insults should you not pardon, in order to become the son of the King of Heaven, and, as St Gregory of Nyssa puts it, to be made another God,—not, indeed, by nature, but by likeness; not by essence, but by participation of sonship, and by a special right to His unfading inheritance?

318. But further, the Christian man who deals kindly with an enemy, and is inclined to forgiveness, not only renders himself like to the Eternal Father, but contracts, in addition, a special resemblance to the only-begotten Incarnate Son of God, Who in the days of His sojourning amongst us in this vale of tears, gloried in pardoning the outrages put upon Him by His enemies. Cast but a passing glance on the story of His life, and you will behold therein one continous example of meekness and beneficence towards those that insulted Him. Jesus was born in a poor stable in Bethlehem. Scarce had he appeared in this world, when king Herod declared himself His enemy, plotted His destruction, and ended by giving orders that all the infants of Bethlehem and its neighbourhood should be put to the sword, that thus the new-born King might perish in this wholesale massacre. Heaven was preparing to hurl its thunderbolts against the impious wretch; the earth was ready to swallow him up; the Angels, who had hitherto sung peace to men around the Saviour's birthplace, now cry war against this murderous tyrant. And what did Christ do meanwhile? He knew the hatred and cunning of Herod, and He saw the barbarous actions which that wicked man perpetrated; and yet He thought not of vengeance, but held His peace and forgave.

319. Behold Him as He passes through the towns and villages of Palestine, surrounded on every side with enemies jealous of His fame. Some discredit His miracles as hellish delusions; others brand His teachings as a malicious artifice wherewith to lead the thoughtless people astray; others slander Him as an ambitious man, eager to make Himself king; others again pursue Him with stones in their hands, or strive to throw Him headlong down a rocky steep. How, meanwhile, does the Saviour deal with these offenders? Does He show resentment and indignation? Does He straightway severely punish such grievous outrages?

Far from it. He bears with and forgives everything. See Him in Jerusalem kneeling at the feet of Judas, at the very moment when the traitor, banded with His enemies, was plotting His death. Behold how affectionately He washes, with His own hands, the miscreant's feet. See the tenderness with which, in the garden of Gethsemani, He returns with a loving kiss the traitor's greeting. Mark how, on that very spot, He miraculously heals the ear of Malchus, who, as the boldest of the troop, is the first to lay hands upon Him, and to slip round His neck the noose by which He was to be dragged as a malefactor before the judges. Look what a loving glance He casts on the perjured Peter, when he has just denied Him thrice, out of fear of a vile rabble, and a still more contemptible serving-girl. He neither rebuked nor reproached him ; nay more, He wavered not even in His purpose of making him the Head of His Church, and His Vicar upon earth.

320. But who would not be beside himself with amazement at beholding Jesus when in the clutches of His enemies, the more meek as He was more cruelly tortured in every part of His body, His head crowned with thorns, His face disfigured and swollen, His mouth embittered with gall, His hands and feet pierced with coarse nails, His frame still quivering under the smart of a most barbarous scourging? Let us behold Him as in countless ways He is outraged in His honour, now treated as a fool, clad in the disgraceful livery of an idiot, now derided as a mock king; spurned and kicked with wicked feet, blasphemed by sacrilegious tongues, hounded to death by the priests, adjudged more deserving to die than an assassin, proclaimed guilty of capital crimes by the mob, led to the tree of infamy between two thieves, executed along with them, and (what cannot be thought of without horror) scoffed at while hanging on the gibbet, insulted and mocked by His exulting foes. What did our Saviour do under all this shameful treatment? What did He say? Did He command the earth to open under the feet of his treacherous persecutors? Did He ask His Eternal Father to shower down thunderbolts and lightnings upon their heads? He did none of these things. He held His peace and forgave.

321. Yet, what am I saying? Christ did not always hold His peace. He broke silence at last. He spoke of the grievous wrongs done to Him by His enemies, and it was to His Father that He spoke. Let us hearken to His words: "Eternal Father, if I have won any merit with Thee by the obedience I have constantly shown, to this the last moment of My life, I crave one favour: Forgive, dear Father, all those who with these sharp nails have pierced My hands and feet, who have torn My temples with sharp thorns, who with cruel stripes have made My whole body one large wound, . . . who are even now taking away My life, putting Me to the most cruel of all deaths." Here let the reader pause awhile, and ponder whether there be anything more Christlike than to forgive, and to do good to such as ill-treat and outrage Him. St Augustine, inflamed with a holy zeal at these examples of Christ, inveighs against those Christians who thirst after vengeance: "You then, Christian man, seek to be avenged of an enemy by whom you have been grievously injured. You enkindle and inflame your passion, and madly pant after revenge. But look at Jesus Christ, your compassionate Physician and most loving Saviour, Who hung on the tree of infamy, and has not yet avenged the grievous affront put upon Him. How, then, can you, despite this shining example of your Divine Master, desire vengeance, being altogether heedless of your duty to imitate Him? For God's sake, look at Him languishing on the Cross, and with His very life-blood preparing a remedy for your anger. Behold Him hanging on the tree, whence, as from a tribunal of authority, He commands you to forgive. Hearken to Him praying for His murderers in these touching words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, and learn hereby how you are to deal with those who have offended you."*

* Tu, O Christiane, quæris vindicari de adversario tuo, qui tibi forsitan injuriam fecit; æstuas, furis, anhelas, festinas vindicari: attende Christum medicum ægritudinis tuæ, attende Redemptorem animæ tuæ. Propter te pependit in ligno, et nondum est vindicatus: et tu vis vindicari, et non vis tantum et talem magistrum imitari? Ideo pati voluit, ut tibi patientiæ suæ demonstraret exemplum. Vide pendentem, et tibi languenti de suo sanguine medicamentum conficientem. Vide pendentem, et tibi de ligno, tamquam de

322. If, moreover, we reflect that this same tender love which Jesus showed to His enemies whilst He lived amongst us as a mortal man, is still shown to them now that He is living in the glory of heaven, can we find it in our heart to refuse love to those who offend us? Who can recount the affronts patiently received and endured by Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, where He abides in person in the same glory as in Paradise amid the Persons of the Trinity? Who can number the insults He has to put up with, both from unbelievers who acknowledge Him not, and from Christians who fear Him not? Who can tell the outrages which are offered to Him in the pictures and images that represent His Divine Person, without His exacting the punishment so richly deserved? I venture to say that the injuries which He now suffers, not only without resentment, but even showing favour to those who insult Him, are far more grievous than those He had to endure at the time of His most bitter Passion. In order not to weary the reader, I select one instance only out of thousands of outrages, because it is well authenticated; for it was quoted from St Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, in the Seventh Council, and was listened to by the Fathers with tears of compunction.*

323. Beyrout, where this stupendous prodigy, or rather series of prodigies, occurred, is a city of Syria, situated on the confines of Tyre and Sidon, and dependent upon Antioch. A Christian, resident in this city, having taken a house hard by the synagogue, had hung over his bed a picture of our Lord, painted by Nicodemus with his own hands. When the owner of this picture was dying, he left it to Gamaliel, who in his turn passed it on to St James, from whom it went to St Simeon, who left it to St Zacheus. After this, it had been handed down as a heirloom from father to son, until it came into the possession of the aforesaid Christian, to whom it belonged at the time when the prodigies I have to tell of came to pass. This man being obliged to move to a larger house, forgot to take the picture with him, or rather, as St Athanasius observes, God so disposed that he should

tribunali, præcipientem. Audi precantem: *Pater*, inquit, *ignosce illis, quia nesciunt quid faciunt.* Serm. 2, De Sanctis.

* Apud Surium, 9 Nov.

leave it behind.* His former residence having been meanwhile occupied by a Jew, the new tenant invited his friends to dinner with him, who, on seeing a picture so hateful to them, reproached him sharply and bitterly; but as he alleged for excuse his inadvertence, they were silenced for a time. After the dinner was ended, they laid an accusation against him before the chiefs of the synagogue, who, assembling together, and accompanied by a large crowd, went to the house of the culprit. There, on seeing the picture of our Saviour hanging on the wall, they were all enraged with the Jew for daring to keep that kind of picture in his house, and after loading him with abuse, they excommunicated him, as one guilty of an enormous crime, from the synagogue. Then turning their rage and hate against Jesus Christ, they took down the picture from its place, and, inflamed with devilish spite, they said to one another, "Let us heap upon it the same outrages as our forefathers inflicted upon Him.†" They then began, with one accord, to spit in its face, to smite it as hard as they could, to vomit forth against it the most impious blasphemies which their fury could suggest. They next drove sharp nails into the hands and feet, and having soaked a sponge in vinegar and gall, they pressed it, in mockery and scorn, upon the lips. Finally, after many other outrages, they exclaimed, "We are told that our forefathers pierced Christ through the heart with a spear. We must, take care, then, not to omit this particular insult."‡ And without delay, one of the number, laying hold of a spear, thrust it into the right side. Wonderful to relate, at this stroke, the blood and water began to flow so profusely, that in a few moments the whole floor was flooded. A water-jar was called for by some of the miscreants, and holding it to the bleeding side, they awaited the result of so strange an event. A large vessel having been procured forthwith, and held to our Saviour's side, it soon filled up to the brim with the sacred stream.

* Imaginem Domini ille forte reliquit, oblivione quidem illud, sed tamen divinâ dispensatione.

† Quæcumque designaverunt patres nostri in illum, ea et nos quoque faciamus in illius imaginem.

‡ Clarum nobis est, quod lanceâ latus ejus pupugerunt: nihil a nobis omittatur.

324. What unbelief could behold so amazing a prodigy and not confess itself worsted and overcome? Yet these wicked men were more than ever hardened, and more than ever insulted their own Saviour. "Let us take the jar," they said, "into our synagogue, and gather together all the sick in the neighbourhood, in order to rub them with this blood. If they are not cured forthwith, we may say that this is but another of those pretended miracles which the followers of Christ are accustomed to boast of." They agreed to the proposal, hoping by this test to give our Saviour the lie, and to discredit the convictions of His followers. They therefore gathered into their synagogue great numbers of the blind, the halt, the palsy-stricken, and such as suffered from fever; some being brought in on their own beds, while others were helped in on the arms of their neighbours; and every one of them, at the mere contact of this precious blood, was forthwith healed. The rumour of this miracle spread all over the city, and throughout the adjacent towns, and the deaf, the dumb, the leprous, and such as were tormented by grievous or incurable ailments, flocked from all sides to be healed. The synagogue, though very roomy, was not able to hold them, for while some were within the building, others were waiting outside; all crowded together, expecting to recover their health, which was restored to them on the spot by means of this miraculous fluid.

325. By far the most astounding of these wonders was the conversion of these stiff-necked Jews. Confounded at such an accumulation of marvels, they stood abashed, became contrite and were converted. They hastened weeping to the church, where the patriarch of Antioch happened to be, craved pardon for their unbelief, confessed the truth of our holy religion, renounced their Jewish superstitions, and with one voice asked to be baptized in a body. Having been regenerated in the saving stream, they begged the aforesaid Patriarch to change their synagogue into a church, and to dedicate it to the Saviour of mankind. The Jews of the neighbouring towns, following their example, asked for baptism, which was granted, and for the consecration of their synagogues. The Patriarch witnessing meanwhile such numerous healings of soul and body, would have all Christendom to share

in the miraculous blood, which he distributed in a great number of phials, and sent as a most precious gift to the Churches of Asia, Europe, and Africa, in many of which it is still kept and venerated.

326. My statement, then, is true; that if the love of Christ for His enemies was so ardent while He lived in our mortal flesh, His goodness towards them is no less now that He is reigning above on His starry throne. What more could these Jewish miscreants have done to provoke His wrath, or to stir Him up to vengeance? Yet our Saviour caused not the earth to open and swallow them, reduced them not to ashes, annihilated them not, as He might have done, by a single nod; on the contrary, at the very moment they were pouring forth the most outrageous blasphemies against Him, and inflicting upon Him the most cruel and heartless ill-usage, He was imparting to them the most extraordinary favours, working countless miracles to enlighten their blindness and to rescue them from the abyss of perdition.

327. Behold, then, the most fitting and most effectual means of preserving perfect charity towards those who are our enemies; —to keep before our eyes the example of kindness and forgiveness which our Blessed Saviour showed so lovingly, both on earth and in Heaven, to them that did Him despite. This will extinguish every inward motion of resentment, and soften our hearts when stung by the malice of others; according to the wise teaching of St John Chrysostom. "With this recollection, as with fresh water," writes St Gregory of Nazianzus, "you will be able to quench every spark of hate, anger, and indignation which burns within your heart."* "How now," he exclaims, "shall I not put up with an affront, an injury, an injustice, seeing that the God made Man has borne so many grievous insults for my sake?" This example of the meekness of Christ, if opportunely set before the mind, will be a most soothing balsam wherewith to assuage the smart of the wounds inflicted on the soul by the malice of an enemy, and will preserve it in perfect charity towards all who hate us. †

* Cum tibi grave aliquid, et durum ferenti subrepunt furor et ira, recordare mansuetudinis Christi, et statim mansuetus eris et clemens. Serm. de Mansuetud.

† Si quando animus tuus acceptæ injuriæ dolore exarserit, fac tibi Christus,

CHAPTER IV.

CERTAIN DEGREES OF PERFECTION IN THE LOVE OF OUR ENEMIES.

328. Brotherly Love for our Enemies is not a virtue that is indivisible, or without parts. It can always increase, always become more perfect, until it reaches the loftiest degree of heroism. It is therefore needful to explain the stages of its growth, so as to know to what heights of charity we should aspire, and to raise ourselves thereunto by the efforts of our mind.

329. Whoever would preserve charity towards such as offend him, must begin, says St Gregory, by forecasting the injuries and offences which may be done to him, in order that, being forearmed by this prevision as with a breastplate, he may, without sorrow or resentment, meet the blows of the injuries inflicted by his neighbour without violating the laws of charity.* Cassian develops this principle, and the means of putting it into practice. Whoever, he writes, feels troubled and provoked to anger on account of the wrongs done him by his enemies, should frequently place before the eyes of his mind the injuries to which he is liable and, going still further, should figure to himself what is hardest and most intolerable to his natural frailty. Then lifting up his eyes, he should consider the hardships the saints have borne with, and the outrages endured by our Blessed Saviour, that by the light of this contrast he may account everything too far below what he deserves, and accept all with a meek and lowly heart. By this means he will be prepared for patient endurance, and ever disposed to keep charity towards those who deal with him

Christique vulnera in mentem veniant, quantulaque pars hæc sint eorum quæ Dominus tuus perpessus est. Hâc ratione animi dolorem velut aspersâ aquâ extinxeris. In Sententiis Tetrastichis.

* Solers animus ante actionis suæ primordia cuncta debet adversantia meditari, ut semper hæc cogitans, et semper contra hæc thorace patientiæ munitus, quidquid acciderit providus superet. Lib. v., Moral., cap. 30.

in a hostile spirit.* This is the first degree to which charity towards our enemies must ascend,—to be ever disposed interiorly to undergo their ill-treatment with meekness of heart.

330. But a valiant soldier is not to be known in times of peace; a warrior cannot be called brave who boasts his prowess and shouts victory while still under canvas. He alone is courageous, who, in the open field, can withstand the shock of the enemy rushing furiously to the attack. Neither can he be said to have charity towards his enemies who is inwardly disposed to suffer the blows of their injuries, if he fail to give proof of his fortitude when put to the test. Hence, besides the preparation of soul, it is further requisite that the injured person do not pay back insulting treatment by deeds of a like nature; that when assailed with the tongue, he should hold his peace or if it be advisable to say something, that he use mild and gentle words. We have an instance of silence under insult in the person of holy David, for when struck with the stones hurled at him by Semei, he sought not vengeance, but expressly forbade it, and rebuked Abisai who, wishing to punish the assailant in his name, was about to draw his sword in order to fall upon the insolent wretch and strike off his head. Not less noteworthy are the examples which David gives us of charitable meekness, when King Saul repeatedly attempted his life; for not only did he not revenge himself, when he had it in his power to do so, but he even slew the man who had put Saul and his son to death. These are remarkable examples of a forbearing charity; nor can we say less of so many other instances recorded for our instruction in the inspired history. But I think we should be more strongly moved by similar examples given to us by Pagans, albeit destitute of the light of faith;

* Cum se homo impatientiæ, seu iræ perturbationibus incursari deprehenderit, contrariis semetipsum objectionibus semper exerceat, et propositis sibi multimodis injuriarum, dispendiorumque generibus velut ab alio sibi irrogatis, assuescat mentem suam omnibus, quæ inferre improbitas potest, perfectâ humilitate succumbere, atque aspera sibi quæque, et intolerabilia frequenter opponens, quantâ eis occurrere lenitate omni jugiter cordis contritione meditetur. Et ita respiciens ad illas sanctorum omnium, sive ipsius Domini passiones, universa non solum conviciorum, sed etiam pœnarum genera, inferiora meritis suis esse pronuncians, ad omnem se dolorum tolerantiam præparabit. Collat. xix., cap. 14.

such as, to cite a few, that brave and noble act of Socrates, related by St Basil, I know not whether for our instruction or for our confusion. This far-famed philosopher having been struck in a public square by a person of mean condition, was not only not incensed with rage at so shameful an insult, but did not defend himself, and remained unmoved under the blows until his face was all livid and swollen. As soon as his ruffian assailant ceased his disgraceful violence, Socrates contented himself with writing on his forehead—as the name of the artist is inscribed on a statue—the name of the perpetrator of the assault, of which his bruised features bore the token.*

331. Nor, again, should we be less moved by the noble conduct, related by Seneca,† of Marcus Cato who, receiving in the baths a blow from a most insolent man, was not a whit discomposed, and when his assailant, being overcome with admiration at such fortitude, begged pardon for his grievous outrage, Cato replied, "I do not remember having been struck;"‡ because he was anxious to spare his antagonist the shame of having been guilty of so gross an outrage. And he relates a similar anecdote of Aristides, who being wrongfully led to execution through the streets of Athens, while all were mourning the hard lot of so just a man, there was an insolent wretch who, hawking some filthy phlegm from the very bottom of his chest, spat it into his face. At this gross offence he contented himself with wiping his face and, with a pleasant smile, said to the bystanders, "Remind him for the future not to yawn so rudely."§ Now tell me, if these men could thus, out of their love for philosophy, show themselves so free from all revengeful passion, what ought we not to do for the love of God, and the love of our neighbour so earnestly commanded and recommended to us by our dear Lord? If these men, in order not to transgress the precepts of human wisdom,

* Ubi vero ille a cædendo desistit, nihil aliud Socrates fecisse dicitur, quam fronti propriæ inscripsisse: "talis fecit," velut statuæ cuidam auctoris nomen. Hom. 24, De Legendis Libris Gentilium.

† De Irâ, lib. II.

‡ Non memini percussum me.

§ At ille abstersit faciem; et subridens ait comitanti se magistratui: Admonete istum, ne postea tam improbe oscitet. Idem in Cons. ad Helviam.

would not meet insult with insult, how should we behave in order not to transgress the laws of God, which bind us so strictly to the love of them that do us wrong?

332. What has been said of injurious deeds holds good also of words. As charity forbids to avenge ourselves in act, so too, does it prohibit insulting and resentful retorts by word of mouth. In the former case, it is our duty to suffer; in the latter, it is our duty, over and above, to hold our peace. Such, according to the testimony of St Jerome, was the behaviour of his beloved disciple St Paula; for when her enemies assailed her with injurious and reproachful words, she never made any reply, but set before her eyes the example of the Royal Prophet, who tells us of himself, that when sinners rose up against him with some offensive words, he became as one deaf, in order not to hear them, and as one dumb and bereft of speech, in order not to reply to them.* Therefore, as St Ambrose argues, if any one insult us and with stinging words provoke us to a rejoinder, let us wrap ourselves up in a deep silence; not imitate a bell, which the more it is struck the more it rings, and the harder the blows given to it the greater the volume of sound which comes from it. Because the person who attacks us is, according to the words of the Royal Psalmist quoted above, not only a transgressor of the divine law, but would moreover, if he could, induce us to transgress it in our turn, by words equally opposed to brotherly love.†

333. If at any time it be requisite to make a reply, let our words be humble, meek, peaceable, and such as may show that our hearts, though wounded by sharp words, answer indeed, but do not resent, the sharp words of those who smite us. "Bless," says the Apostle, "always bless those that persecute you, and do

* Si quando procacior fuisset inimicus, et usque ad verborum jurgia prosiliret, illud psalterii decantabat: *Cum consisteret adversum me peccator, obmutui, et silui a bonis.* Et rursus: *Ego autem sicut surdus non audiebam, et quasi mutus non aperiens os suum. Et factus sum sicut homo non audiens, et non habens in ore suo increpationes.* In Vitâ Paulæ ad Eustoch.

† Quando aliquis nobis conviciatur, lacessit, ad violentiam provocat, ad jurgium vocat; tunc silentium exerceamus, tunc muti fieri non erubescamus. Peccator enim est, qui nos provocat, qui injuriam facit; et nos sui similes fieri desiderat. Lib. i., De Offic. cap. 5.

not curse them."* If you bear yourself in this manner, you will effect two good results: you will preserve charity undiminished within your own heart, and will restore it in him who has dared to violate it; for as the Wise Man says, *A mild answer turneth away wrath*, quenching anger in the heart of an adversary, and making the words to die away on his lips.† Sophronius relates that two aged monks, being on their travels with a youth, lost their way. Seeking to regain the right path, they were obliged to strike across some fields that had recently been sown, and the farmer, fearing the damage they might do to his crops, began to overwhelm them with abuse. Then one of the elder monks, betaking himself to the advice given by St Ambrose, said to his companions, "Hold your tongues; for God's sake, do not retaliate."‡ But as the farmer ceased not to pour forth his abuse, the monk thought it necessary to make some answer, which he did in these words: "You are quite right, my Son, for were we true monks, we should not act as we do; but pardon us, nevertheless, for we have done wrong."§ These meek and humble words extinguished all anger in the breast of the husbandman, who, moved to tears and to compunction, went and cast himself at their feet, craved their pardon for his impertinence, begged them to receive him into their company and, forsaking his fields and home, took the habit, and became a monk. So true is it that nothing has such power to soften the hardness of a heart embittered by passion, as gentle, lowly, and meek words.‖

334. But even this will not suffice for perfect charity, as St Dorotheus tells us; for some persons are to be found who, doing violence to themselves, take no revenge of affronts, but either refrain their tongue altogether from replying to insults or, if they answer, make reply without being ruffled, and without showing

* Benedicite persequentibus vos: benedicite; et nolite maledicere. Rom. xij. 13.

† Responsio mollis frangit iram. Prov. xv. 1.

‡ Per Dominum nullus ei respondeat.

§ Recte dixisti, fili: nam si veri monachi essemus, ista non egissemus. Sed per Dominum indulge nobis, quia peccavimus.

‖ Lingua mollis confringet duritiam. Prov. xxv. 15.

any outward sign of resentment in their countenance; but they nevertheless, defiled within by embittered feelings against their antagonists,* brood over the memory of injuries received, ruminate them in their minds, nourish rancorous feelings in their hearts, and if they rejoice not at the misfortunes of their enemy, do not assuredly rejoice in his good success: as the above-quoted authority goes on to observe. It is clear that such persons as these have not perfect charity towards their enemies, since Jesus Christ is not satisfied if we return not offence for offence, biting word for biting word; but He commands us to love our enemies with a sincere affection.† And this is His reason: "If," He says, "you love them that love you, what reward can you expect? Even sinners deprived of sanctifying grace, and the heathen destitute of faith, by a natural instinct attain this degree of love of their neighbour. What reward, then, can I give you for an action of such low degree? The love worthy of a guerdon consists in loving him that hates you."‡

335. Such was the charity of Stephen, the founder and Abbot of a monastery under the walls of Rieti, as we read concerning him in St Gregory's homilies. Among the other great virtues which shone in the soul of this saintly man, his love for his enemies stood out in bold relief; for it was his custom to inscribe on his list of friends any one who had done him an injury, to repay his insolence by hearty thanks, to account as gain whatever damage was done to his possessions, and to look upon all his enemies as the helpers and furtherers of his spiritual progress.§ This was indeed sincere love for his enemies, since it had struck its roots deep down in his heart.

* Alius non verbo, non opere, non aspectu, non habitu studet malum pro malo reddere; affligitur autem in corde erga fratrem. Doct.

† Ego autem dico vobis: diligite inimicos vestros.

‡ Si enim diligitis eos, qui vos diligunt, quam mercedem habebitis? Nonne et publicani hoc faciunt? Matth. v. 44, 46.

§ Virtus tamen patientiæ vehementer in eo excreverat, ita ut eum sibi amicum crederet, qui sibi molestiæ aliquid irrogâsset. Reddebat contumeliæ gratias. Si aliquid in ipsâ suâ inopiâ damnum fuisset illatum, hoc maximum lucrum putabat. Omnes suos adversarios nihil aliud quam adjutores existimabat. In Evang. Hom. 35.

336. When you shall have attained to this inner and heartfelt love for such as offend you, you must not rest here, but must pass onward to wish them every good, remembering that love consists in wishing well to the person beloved; you must desire his advantage in all sincerity of heart, and beg God to bestow it on him with liberal hands. It is this precisely that our Redeemer inculcates upon us in order that we may become like our Heavenly Father.* To this degree of charity the Royal Prophet had attained, as he confesses himself, saying that he never ceased to pray for those who slandered him with their tongues, and sought to blacken his fair fame by their foul speeches.† This was the demeanour of the great proto-martyr Stephen, when, overwhelmed by his persecutors with a shower of stones, which they cast at him so brutally, he prayed God not to lay so heinous a sin to their charge.‡ So too, our Saviour behaved towards them that crucified Him, as we said above, and pleaded for them with His Eternal Father, imploring their pardon.§ St Augustine ponders the heroic acts of charity performed by Christ and St Stephen, in thus praying for their murderers, and ends by saying, that if we cannot imitate our Redeemer, we should at least imitate His servant; implying by this, that even if in the case of our being able to excuse ourselves from copying Jesus Christ in an act so arduous and trying to nature, because He is the true and real Son of God, still we cannot allege the like excuse for not imitating St Stephen, who was only a man like ourselves.‖

* Orate pro persequentibus, et calumniantibus vos, ut sitis filii Patris vestri, qui in cœlis est. Matth. v. 44.

† Pro eo ut me diligerent, detrahebant mihi: ego autem orabam. Psal. cviij. 4.

‡ Domine, ne statuas illis hoc peccatum.

§ Pater, ignosce illis.

‖ Ecce Stephanus lapidatur sic constitutus quasi ante oculos nostros. Ecce membrum Christi, ecce athleta Christi. Inspice illum, qui pependit in ligno. Crucifigebatur ille, iste lapidabatur. Ille dixit: *Pater ignosce illis, quia nesciunt quid faciunt.* Iste quid dicit? audiamus illum, si forte vel ipsum imitari valeamus. Primo beatus Stephanus stans oravit pro se, et ait: *Domine Jesu accipe spiritum meum:* deinde genuflexit, et genuflexus ait: *Ne statuas illis hoc peccatum: et hoc dicto, obdormivit.* Ergo carissimi, si non potestis imitari Dominum, imitamini conservum, imitamini S. Stephanum. Serm. 2, de Sanctis.

337. But further, if besides keeping our heart well affected towards our enemy, besides wishing him well, and striving to obtain his welfare by prayer, we do this at great inconvenience or cost to ourselves, we have already attained an heroic degree of charity towards our enemies; for this is a height of perfection which few reach, nor can we rise to its level, unless helped by an extraordinary grace of God. And here, setting aside for the moment all arguments taken from authority and reason, I will relate a most notable action, which has been recorded by grave authors, with a hope that this of itself may have force to engender within the heart of my reader a generous charity towards any one who may have grievously offended him.* In the city of Bologna lived a lady no less worthy of regard on account of the nobility of her birth than for the lustre of her virtues. She had one only son, and he was the single object of her love, the solitary hope of her heart, the sole heir of her fortune. Now, while the youth was one day playing at some game of ball in front of her mansion, a stranger passing by, either by clumsiness or of set purpose, disturbed his amusement. The young man being of a hot temper, turned in anger upon the passer-by, and began to assail him with a volley of abuse. The latter, stung to the quick, drew his sword, and plunging it into the heart of the youth, left him weltering in his blood. Adverting to the destruction he had wrought, now that it was past remedy, he ran in haste and perplexity to the gate of the mansion, not knowing it to be the home of the young man whose death he had just caused. Hurried on by his sense of danger, he flew up the stairs and presented himself before the lady of the house, holding in his hand the sword still dripping with the blood of her innocent son, and craved her help. She, as yet unacquainted with the fatal event, promised him her protection and hid him in her own apartments. Meanwhile, the news of the cruel murder having spread, the officers of justice arrived on the spot in search of the assassin, and not being able to find him, they said to one another, "If this good lady only knew that the young man who has been killed is her only son, she would not be so anxious to conceal the murderer." One may well imagine

* Segn., Crist. Istruit., Part I. Disc. 20, n. 20.

what were the poor mother's feelings on hearing these words. She did not drop down dead, for her great virtue kept her alive. I have said she did not drop down dead; but I must now record that she exercised such self-control as to deny a vent to her natural grief, to force her heart to love the murderer, and to wish him all the good she desired for her only child. She ordered a splendid repast, and waited upon him herself, and had the heart to pour water on the very hands that were yet stained with the life-blood of her beloved son. After the table was cleared, she addressed him by the name of Son. He was filled with astonishment when he heard himself greeted by so tender a name. But the lady turned his amazement into stupor, by something still more marvellous, saying to him, "I am no longer a mother, since you have robbed me of the only son I had; but I will again be a mother, and of you alone. Henceforward, you shall be my son and heir. For the present, make haste to put yourself in safety, as your life is in danger. Here is a purse full of money: saddle the swiftest horse in my stables, and hasten to take flight beyond the frontiers." She would have said more, but her tears choked her utterance. The street in which this extraordinary event took place was ever after called the *Strada Pia*, or *Holy Street*, in memory of her heroic charity, and of so illustrious a miracle of forgiveness.

338. Let this, then, be for the future your revenge, to do good to them that ill-treat you. The Wise Man says, *Feed thine enemy if he be hungry, give him to drink if he be athirst.** But this, you will object, is too hard, and too much beyond the strength of human nature. True, but it does not transcend the powers of grace; for God, says St Basil, would never have laid upon us the commandment to love our enemies, were He not willing to furnish us with the strength needed for its fulfilment.† I may therefore say with St Ambrose, "Either you have within you a strong and efficacious love for him that offends you, or you have not. If you have it

* Si esurierit inimicus tuus, ciba illum; si sitierit, potum da illi. Prov. xxvj. 21.

† Sine dubio Deus non præcepisset diligi inimicum, nisi facultatem largitus fuisset id faciendi. Reg. Brevior. Quæst. 176

not, pray to God without ceasing, and this prayer shall be for you a protecting shield, wherewith the Lord will help your weakness and give you strength. If, on the other hand, you have such Charity, pray for your enemy, and your prayer will serve to protect him against every evil, and will impart to yourself the virtue needful to do him good.*

CHAPTER V.

OF CHARITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOURS IN ALMSDEEDS AND OTHER CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY.

339. ALMSGIVING may be an act either of moral or of theological virtue, according to the motives from which it proceeds. If he who relieves the miseries of others, be moved merely by the natural goodness that is felt when alleviating the sufferings of a fellow-man, he practises a moral virtue. But if his motive in lending them a helping hand be the delight which God takes in such merciful deeds, and he be urged to give alms for the love he bears to God, then he practises a theological virtue. And it is of almsgiving, precisely as an act of theological charity, that we are now about to speak.

340. Nothing manifests so plainly the delight taken by God in almsgiving, as the commands imposed by Him upon us to practise it, as well as the frequency with which He has repeated, and the earnestness with which He has insisted upon, this precept. "I command thee," He says, in the Book of Deuteronomy, "to open thy hand to thy needy and destitute brother, who dwells with thee in the land."† To Tobias He repeats this precept, with-

* Si infirmus es, ora: si fortis es, ora. Infirmus, pro te ora: fortis, pro inimico tuo ora. Bonum scutum infirmitatis oratio. Tu oras, et Dominus te protegit. Bonum scutum etiam triumphantis: ut inimicum tuum, quem possis ferire, defendas. In Psal. xxviij.

† Ego præcipio tibi, ut aperias manum fratri tuo egeno et pauperi, qui tecum versatur in terrâ. Deut. xv. 11.

out exempting any one. *According to thy ability be merciful. If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little.** Isaias inculcates the same, setting forth in detail the particular kinds of almsdeeds to which God would bind us: *Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house; and when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh.*† For the poor are our fellow-creatures, our equals by nature, however much they may differ from us in worldly position.

341. Jesus Christ reiterates the same commandment in St Luke,‡ and again in St Matthew.§ And by the mouth of the latter holy Evangelist He lures us by the hope of obtaining the unfading treasures of Heaven to scatter our alms broadcast.‖ In fine, as St Cyprian aptly observes, there is no commandment so frequently insisted upon by our Saviour as that of almsgiving.¶ And St Augustine, in accordance with the former saint just cited, observes, that in all the Holy Scriptures, whether of the Old or of the New Testament, God incites His people to deeds of mercy and to the relief of the miserable, in every age and in every place.** Now if an earthly king were thus always to insist, in every edict he puts forth, upon the same point, intimating it at the beginning and during the course of his reign, as well as at its close and at the end of his days, what subject could be so disaffected towards his sovereign as not to be very earnest in doing what he so efficaciously desires, and not to lay the performance thereof to

* Quomodo potueris, ita esto misericors. Si multum tibi fuerit, abundanter tribue: si exiguum tibi fuerit, etiam exiguum libenter impertiri stude. Tob. iv. 8.

† Frange esurienti panem tuum; egenos, vagosque induc in domum tuam: cum videris nudum, operi eum, et carnem tuam ne despexeris. Isa. lviij. 7.

‡ Date eleemosynam . . . Date et dabitur vobis. Luc. xj. 41; vij. 38.

§ Vende quæ habes, et da pauperibus. Matth. xix. 21.

‖ Thesaurizate vobis thesauros in cœlo. Ibid. xix. 20.

¶ In evangelio Dominus doctor nostræ vitæ, et magister salutis æternæ, inter sua mandata divina, et præcepta cœlestia nihil crebrius mandat et præcipit, quam ut insistamus eleemosynis dandis. De eleemosyna.

** Nunquam admonitio divina cessavit, nunquam tacuit quo minus in scripturis sanctis tam veteribus, quam novis, semper et ubique ad misericordiæ opera Dei populus provocetur. Lib. de Eleem.

heart? What Christian, then, can fail to make great account of almsgiving, to be well affected towards it, to love it, and strive to practise it with some inconvenience to himself; knowing, as he must, that it has been so repeatedly commanded, and been inculcated in such varied shapes, by the Prince, the Sovereign, the Ruler of the human race, I mean God; and that it is so acceptable, so agreeable, so dear to Him?

342. I now bring forward in attestation of the singular delight which God takes in almsdeeds, a fact that has been furnished to me by an eye-witness, the celebrated John of Cantipré.* He relates an instance of extraordinary charity displayed towards the needy by a lady of Brabant, who was well-known to him, and was, moreover, one of his penitents. In a season of great scarcity, when the poor, worn out by famine, were forced either to die or to bear the stamp of death on their faces, she opened her granaries, and distributed her corn without measure to as many as would come to fetch it at her gates. Her husband, at the sight of this open-handed, and as he thought improvident, charity, feared lest his household should come to want necessary nourishment. He therefore fixed a certain quantity of corn for weekly distribution, as much as would fill a bin, with orders to his lady not to go beyond this measure in the dispensing of her daily charities. The bin was soon exhausted by the crowds of poor who flocked to the house. Others coming up in the meantime, the tender-hearted lady was pierced to the quick by her compassionate charity and, unable to bear the sight of so much misery, ordered her maid to return to the bin. The girl went, though with reluctance, as she knew it to be quite empty, opened the bin and found it full to the very top of the finest corn. "A miracle! a miracle!" was the cry of the astonished woman. At this outcry, her mistress hastened to the spot; her husband followed, then all the household; and, crowding round the bin, they were convinced of the truth of this great prodigy, for which they poured forth fervent thanks to God. The husband, more deeply moved than the others, threw open his granaries, and gave his wife full liberty to distribute as much as she thought fit. God con-

* In Lib. Apum, lib. ij. cap. 25.

tinuing to show His favour to the charitable deeds of the good lady, multiplied her store to such an extent that half a dozen granaries would not have contained the quantity she gave away within a few months.

343. This miracle was the first token God gave of His good pleasure in the charity with which this holy person relieved her neighbours' wants. But the following miracle is still more singular. As a reward for her alms, God sent an Angel, night and day, at the time of the canonical hours, under the appearance of a most beautiful bird which, with a song of Paradise, filled her senses and spirit with unspeakable sweetness. John of Cantipré asked her to what the song of this heavenly bird could be likened. She replied that there was nothing here below that could compare with it, since it not only filled her ears with ravishing melody and her heart with sweet raptures, but lifted up her mind to a delightful contemplation of the things of Heaven.*

344. But though the miracles vouchsafed by God from time to time to private persons are a kind of declaration of the great delight He takes in the relief of the poor, the clearest and brightest proof of this fact is that which He will give on the day of the General Judgment, in the valley of Josaphat, in sight of the whole world. For when calling His chosen ones to the possession of the heavenly kingdom, He will protest that He bestows upon them this boundless happiness as a reward for the alms they shall have given for His sake. He will say to them, *I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; athirst, and you gave Me to drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me.* On the other hand, in consigning the reprobate to everlasting torments, He will say to them, *I was hungry, and ye gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me not to drink: I was naked, and ye clothed Me not:* and so forth. And here it is to be noted that our Blessed Saviour does not say the *poor man* was hungry, thirsty, naked, and the rest, but *I* was hungry and thirsty, *I* was naked: — to give us to understand that mercy

* Nihil, ait, in terris est, quod illis possit vocibus comparari. Nec solis auribus delector in illis, verum etiam ad cor interius transfunditur modulamen, et ex eo spiritus meus ad delicias æternales excitatur.

shown to the needy is accounted by Him as if shown to His own person.

345. St John Chrysostom makes the following apt remarks on this Gospel truth :—"Were Christ to come in person to crave an alms, and were you to behold Him suppliant at your feet, imploring some assistance in His want, could you find it in your heart to say Him No, to spurn Him from you? Surely not. You would sooner, I am convinced, empty out all the gold and silver in your purses to afford Him abundant aid; you would strip the very clothes off your back to cover Him; you would make a free gift of all your revenues and wealth for His service. Why, then, not do as much for Christ in the person of His poor? Why withhold the assistance of a vile coin, the refreshment of a little food, of a garment, a bed, a lodging? Perhaps you think that it is quite another thing to give to Christ Himself, and to Christ in the person of His poor. Perhaps you are of opinion that the lot of Mary Magdalen, of Martha, and the other holy women who supplied our Saviour with food, was better than yours, who feed Him only in the person of His poor? But have you not heard Christ Himself assuring you of the contrary, saying, *Whatsoever you do to the least of My brethren, you do to Me.*"*

346. Then, to give greater energy to his discourse, the holy Doctor goes on to say, that to tend and feed Christ in His poor is a far nobler and more meritorious act than to tend and feed Christ in person; for were our Lord to appear to you, His very presence would sweetly compel you to such acts of service. What heart so stony as to be able to withstand the ravishing aspect of our most loving Redeemer? While, on the other hand, when you feed and assist Jesus Christ in the persons of the needy, you do it with a more effectual love, and with greater purity of intention, since you serve the wretched for the sake of Christ, but without the consolations of the sweet attractions of love.

* Certe si Christum Dominum nunc videritis, non dubitaret unusquisque vestrum universam substantiam in eum erogare: verum nunc nec teruntium erogas. Non audis dicentem: *Quod uni ex meis minimis facis, mihi facis?* nihil nempe interest, sive huic pauperi, sive ipsi Christo dederis. Nihil enim minus habes his mulieribus (nempe Magdalenâ, Marthâ, et ceteris), quæ tunc Christum alebant. Hom. 89, in cap. 27 Matth.

You serve our Lord with greater faith when you serve Him in the person of a poor man; for the very reason that you see Him not with the eyes of the body. You serve Him with greater reverence, because greater honour is shown to a prince by doing homage and service to one of his menials for his sake, than if homage were done to him in person.*

347. Ecclesiastical history is full of wondrous events, by which Jesus Christ has plainly shown what, at the last day, He will publish to the whole world. I will select one only of the number, which is left on record by the above-mentioned John of Cantipré, and I choose it because it was communicated to him by the niece of the person to whom it happened. Count Theobald, a man large-hearted, especially towards the poor, was journeying in the midst of a hard winter, when on his road he fell in with a poor man who was quite naked. Moved to pity for one whom he saw pinched by the frost, and touched by the doleful moans with which the wretched creature bewailed his misery, the Count said to him, "My Son, what do you want,—what would you have?" "What I would like to have," replied the poor man, "is your cloak, to cover my nakedness." Without delay, the good Count took off his cloak, which he gave to the mendicant, that he might shield himself with it against the inclemency of the weather. "Do you want anything else?" added the Count. "Yes," replied the other, "I would like to have your jerkin." The Count forthwith divested himself of it, put it on the poor man, and continued to ask if he wanted anything more of him. "Yes," answered the poor man, "give me your shirt too." This last request appeared too unreasonable; still the Count, urged on by his great charity, took off his shirt, and remained exposed to the inclemency of the weather with only his vest. While handing it to the beggar, he said, "Will you be content at last with this?" "No," replied the man, "I want your hat, to defend my head from the wind."

* Immo (sed nemo his verbis turbetur) multo etiam majus. Non enim est æquale ipsum Dominum præsentem alere, cujus præsentia vel lapideum ad se animum attraheret; et propter ejus verba dumtaxat, pauperes, mendicos, et ægrotos alere, atque curare. . . . Majoris erga Christum reverentiæ signum est, quandoquidem ideo conservum tuum in omnibus diligenter pascis atque curas.

At this fresh request, the Count stood astounded, and overcome by the shame of appearing in public bare-headed, gave answer, "I cannot deprive myself of that, because I am bald." At these words, the poor man, who was Jesus Christ Himself under this disguise, vanished from his sight, leaving on the ground the cloak and the other garments which had been given Him. The Count being amazed at such an event, and repenting his not having given his hat also to our Redeemer, burst into a flood of tears, and for the rest of his days never denied the poor any request they made him.

348. These and similar appearances of Jesus Christ under the form of a mendicant, are intended to convince believers that, though He does not always appear visibly in the persons of the poor, yet is He always really in them; and that if He ask not alms with His own mouth, He always craves by theirs. Now hereupon I make the following reflections:—If Christ showed that He was not perfectly satisfied at being refused the Count's hat, even when that nobleman had stripped himself almost to the skin for the sake of God, can we expect Him to be content with those heartless Christians who refuse Him a loaf of bread, a piece of money, a draught of water, a left-off article of clothing, a little shelter, some refreshment, or other such trifles which Jesus asks for by the mouth of His poor? Assuredly not. But at the last day He will visit upon such their want of charity to Him in the person of His poor, by closing against them the gates of His Heavenly Kingdom.

349. Now let us pass on to the consideration of other still more precious qualities to be discovered in almsdeeds. The Holy Fathers go so far as to say that an almsgiver is another God; because, according to the words of the Psalmist,* and according to the expression used by the Church in her prayer, nothing is so proper to God as to show mercy.† So too, the man who shows compassion to the needy and helps them in their wants, partakes of that quality which God prizes most; and if he becomes not another God by nature, he is made at least similar to God by

* Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus. Psal. cxliv. 9.

† Deus cui proprium est misereri semper, et parcere.

participation in this Divine attribute. Listen how St Gregory of Nyssa treats of this matter: "I am aware," he writes, "that in Holy Writ God is called merciful. This is the title given to God by the Prophet Jonas and by the great Moses. If, then, the title of merciful is the proper name of God, what can I say of thee when thou showest mercy to the needy, unless that thou becomest another God, being stamped with the peculiar characteristic of the Godhead."* Listen, again, to St Gregory of Nazianzus: "Nothing in man is so godlike as to do good to the wretched; for though God bestows greater, and man lesser, benefits, yet both act in the proportion of their means. Be then a God to the necessitous, by imitating God's mercy."† And once more, speaking of the poor, the same Saint writes, "The poor man, though overwhelmed with affliction, is thy fellow-member. To thee as unto a God, however much thou mayest choose to regard him with a stern and pitiless eye, is he recommended. These words will cause you to blush for your own hardness of heart, and will stir you up to be mindful of the poor man."‡ Clement of Alexandria expresses the same sentiment, when he says, "Mercy to the poor, if considered as a virtue, is not the pain we feel at beholding the sufferings of others, as philosophers have defined it; but it is a something divine, imparting, as the Prophets teach, a certain godlike splendour to such as are possessed of it."§

350. The reader will not therefore marvel, if in reading the

* Scio in multis locis divinæ scripturæ nomine misericordis sanctos viros divinam potentiam appellare. Sic David in Psalmis, sic Jonas in suâ Prophetiâ; item magnus Moyses in multis locis suæ sanctionis nominat unum divinum. Si ergo misericordis appellatio Deum decet, ad quid aliud te sermo hortatur, nisi ut Deus fies, tamquam formatus et insignitus propriâ notâ deitatis? De Beatitudinibus.

† Nihil tam divinum homo habet, quam de aliis bene mereri, tametsi ille majora, hic minora beneficia conferat, uterque nimirum pro suis viribus. Fac calamitoso sis Deus, Dei misericordiam imitando. In Orat. de Pauperum Amore.

‡ Membrum tuum est, licet calamitate frangatur. Tibi, licet animo forti prætereas, pauper relictus est, tamquam Deo. His enim verbis pudore te forsan provocabo. Eâdem Oratione.

§ Misericordia non est, ut quidam existimarunt philosophi, molestia propter alienas calamitates; sed est potius quid divinum, ut dicunt prophetæ. Stromat. Lib. iv.

life which St Jerome has written of St Paula, he find that this high-born Roman lady, though most wealthy, was so impoverished by her almsdeeds, that at her death she did not leave her daughter Eustochium so much as a shilling for her support. In going through the lives of other Saints, he will discover that St Charles Borromeo was so profuse in his charities to the poor, that he did not keep for himself as much as a pallet upon which to sleep, but had to lie down on the bare boards. John the Almoner, Patriarch of Alexandria, though possessed of the abundant revenues of his see, brought himself so low for the sake of the poor, that he had not a single covering wherewith to protect himself at night against the inclemency of the season. St Thomas of Villanova, at his death, was without a bed whereon to stretch his weary limbs; and in order not to die on the bare floor, he had to borrow one from a beggar to whom, in his charity, he had given it. These great souls knew full well how much we please God, and how much we are made like unto Him, by the mercy which, by means of alms, we bestow on the poor. And hence, in their desire to do the good pleasure of the Almighty, and to gain for themselves a certain character and impress of the Godhead, they generously gave to the poor their gold, silver, garments, furniture, and whatever precious objects were in their possession.

351. It must here be observed, that by almsdeeds the Holy Fathers understand the corporal works of mercy we perform towards our neighbour. Hence we must account as almsdeeds, not only feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, but lodging strangers, waiting on the sick, ransoming slaves, visiting prisoners, relieving the oppressed, taking charge of orphans, defending the cause of the widow, and the like acts of Christian piety enumerated by Lactantius.*

* Si quis victu indiget, impertiamur. Si quis nudus occurrerit, vestiamus. Si quis a potentiori injuriam sustineat, eruamus. Pateat domicilium nostrum peregrinis, et indigentibus tecto. Pupillis defensio, viduis tutela nostra non desit. Redimere ab hoste captivos, magnum misericordiæ opus est, item ægros pauperes vestire, atque fovere. Inopes et pauperes, si obierint, non patiamur insepultos jacere. Hæc sunt opera, hæc officia misericordiæ, quæ si quis perfecerit, verum et acceptum sacrificium immolabit. Divin. Instit., cap. 5.

352. Now these several corporal works of mercy may be so many acts of Theological Charity, if performed for the love of God, since God accounts them all (as indeed He accounts all the other acts already enumerated by me) as done to Himself. St Gregory relates of the monk Martyrius, that having met with a disgusting leper who, lying full length on the ground, said that his extreme weakness hindered him from making his way to his own lodging, he wrapped him up in his cloak, and putting him on his shoulder, took him to the monastery. Scarce had he reached it, when the leper, who was Christ Himself under that wretched exterior, shed a ray of glory over his features, saying, "Martyrius, thou hast not been ashamed to shelter Me here on earth, nor will I be ashamed to receive thee into Heaven."* We also read of the same saintly Pope, that being in the habit of entertaining twelve pilgrims at his table, he often received Jesus Christ among the number, in the guise of a pilgrim. And in the Scriptures we are told that God, by the mouth of the Archangel Raphael, praised Tobias for the earnest care taken by him in burying the dead. And again, in modern times, Jesus Christ has signified, by the mouth of His most blessed Mother, how acceptable to Him is the ransoming of captives, since He willed her to establish a Religious Order, whose special duty it is to strike off the fetters from those poor wretched slaves who are oppressed by the chains under which they groan. And St Paulinus, as St Gregory relates,† left us an illustrious example; for, after giving all he had for the redemption of captives, he added thereto the gift of himself, by substituting himself, of his own free motion, for the son of a desolate widow.

353. But St Augustine goes further still, and affirms that almsdeeds comprise every kind of relief and bodily service rendered to our neighbour who needs such assistance. He who supports a lame man, bestows an alms on him with his feet; he who guides a blind man, does him a charity with his eyes; he who carries an invalid or old man upon his shoulders, imparts to him

* Martyri, tu non me erubuisti super terram: ego non te erubescam super cœlos. Hom. 39, in Evang.

† Lib. iij. Dialog., cap. 1.

an alms of his strength.* From this point of view, says the holy Doctor, none so poor but they may bestow an alms on the wealthiest man of the world. He explains his thought by the following imaginary case :—"A man, not less rich in all the goods of fortune than poor in health, comes to the banks of a river. There he must stop. He cannot strip, else he will catch cold, sicken, and perhaps even die. A poor man, of a more vigorous frame, approaches, takes him on his back, and carries him over the stream. He has surely bestowed an abundant alms on the rich man by rendering him such a service." "Wherefore," as the Saint has well put it, "think not that those who are in need of money are the only poor. All are poor in regard of what they stand in want of, and all of us can give alms by helping our neighbour in his particular want, whatever that may be." †

354. If, therefore, we aspire to attain the perfection of brotherly love, let us help our neighbour in all those things wherein we are conscious that his necessity lies. The occasion of doing this presents itself to us at every moment, either with those of our own household, or with strangers, or else with our friends and acquaintances. For, as St John says, *He that beholds his brother having need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?* ‡

355. We may omit for the present another most effectual motive which we might add to these hitherto alleged, to stimulate to deeds of charity towards the needy, all such as are not touched by nobler inducements. "Would you," says St Augustine, "gain God's mercy for the sins you have been guilty of?

* Iste non potest ambulare : qui potest ambulare, pedes suos accommodat claudo. Qui videt, oculos suos accommodat cæco : et qui juvenis est et sanus, vires suas accommodat seni vel ægroto, et portat illum. In Psal. cxxv.

† Aliquando et dives invenitur pauper, et a paupere præstatur illi aliquid. Venit nescio quis ad flumen, tanto delicatior, quanto ditior ; transire non potest : si nudatis membris transierit, frigescet, ægrotabit, morietur. Accedit pauper exercitatior corpore ; trajicit divitem, eleemosynam facit in divitem. Ergo nolite tantùm eos putare pauperes, qui non habent pecuniam. In quo quisque pauper est, ibi illum vide, quia fortè tu in eo dives es, in quo ille pauper est, et habes unde accommodes.

‡ Qui viderit fratrem suum necessitatem habere, et clauserit viscera sua ab eo, quomodo caritas Dei manet in eo? I. Joan. iij. 17.

Be merciful to your neighbours,* for God measures to you the same measure that you measure to your brethren."† On the other hand, for God to shut up the bowels of His mercy against you, and to judge you without mercy, all that is required, says St James, is for you to close the bowels of compassion against your neighbour, and not to feel for him on beholding him in straitened circumstances.‡ This is a powerful motive to soften the very hardest heart, and to fill it with tenderness and pity. for the miseries of others. And St John Chrysostom suggests a further motive, which, though it be temporal, is nevertheless of great efficacy. In a sermon preached to the people of Antioch, upon almsdeeds, he shows them that this is a means of realising great gains, since God rewards a hundredfold whatever we bestow for the relief of the poor.§

356. This view of the holy Doctor is fully borne out by a fact related by Cæsarius, and which just occurs to my mind.‖ In a certain monastery ruled an Abbot very profuse in his hospitality to strangers, and in his alms to the poor. God rewarded this charity with the choicest blessings, increasing beyond measure the store of the community. His successor was as niggardly as the former Abbot had been generous, and as hard to the poor as his predecessor had been kind and charitable. He found all kinds of idle pretexts for retrenching the hospitality of the monastery, and stopped almost all the customary doles to beggars. Meanwhile there came to the monastery gates a gray-headed man of venerable aspect, who asked for a night's lodging. The porter admitted him, but clandestinely, as he was aware that these charitable receptions were by no means to the Abbot's liking. Being unable to treat him as well as he could have wished and as the guest deserved, he excused himself by saying that if the stranger were not better treated, he must lay the blame on the poverty of the monastery, which formerly indeed abounded

* Si vis habere misericordiam, esto misericors. In Psal. xcv.

† Quâ mensurâ mensi fueritis, remetietur vobis. Matth. vij. 2.

‡ Judicium sine misericordiâ illi, qui non fecit misericordiam. Jac. ii. 13.

§ Eia, carissimi, hodie ostendamus qualiter est ars omnium artium quæstuosissima eleemosyna. Hom. 33, ad Popul. Antioch.

‖ Miracul., lib. iv., cap. 68.

in riches, but had now fallen into such penury, that they had not even the needful sustenance. The visitor, being acquainted with the avarice of the Superior, replied that the excuse of their straitened circumstances was to be accounted for by the expulsion of two good brothers from the monastery, and that unless they were re-admitted into the house, it would never recover its bygone prosperity. "But who are they?" asked the porter; "what brothers have we expelled?" "One," replied the guest, "is called *Give;* the other is called, *It shall be given unto you:*" and having said this, he took his leave. The porter went spreading this conversation among the community, so that it came to the Abbot's ears, who, having been struck by the truth so clearly hinted to him by the stranger, restored the former hospitality and the almost disused custom of almsgiving; and God began once more to visit him with an abundance of temporal blessings. This shows how true is the saying of St John Chrysostom: "Almsgiving is a means of making large profits out of our money,"* for what we give to God in the person of His poor is not lost, but comes back to us with an increase of a hundredfold.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY WHICH SHOULD BE PRACTISED TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR WITH A VIEW TO HIS SALVATION.

357. St Thomas teaches that the Spiritual Works of Mercy should be held in greater esteem than the Corporal, for three reasons. First, because by them we impart to our neighbour a far higher benefit, namely, a spiritual benefit, which is unquestionably of greater value than that which concerns only the body.† Secondly, because the subject on whom the benefit is conferred, is far more noble; for beyond all doubt the soul is

* Ars omnium artium quæstuosissima est eleemosyna.

† Primo quidem, quia id quod exhibet, nobilius est, scilicet donum spirituale, quod præeminet corporali.

more noble than the body.* Thirdly, because the act of charity by which we afford succour to the soul is far more spiritual than that by which we assist the body in its needs, and therefore has a brighter lustre.† St John Chrysostom attributes to these spiritual works of mercy the same noble qualities, in order to stir up charitable souls to aim at promoting the spiritual good of their neighbour. He says, "They who, by reproof, by instruction, by showing the charms of virtue and the turpitude of vice, rouse the lukewarm and spur them onward in the way of perfection, are deserving of greater praise and of a higher recompense than they who give their money to relieve others in their misery; for our soul is more noble and of greater account than our vile body."‡ Hence, whoever desires to reach the heights of Christian perfection should apply himself to the spiritual works of mercy with great earnestness and ardour of soul.

358. The Saint infers from this doctrine a consequence well fitted to kindle within us the flames of spiritual charity. God declares, by the mouth of the Apostle Paul, that nothing is to Him so pleasing, that He has nothing so much at heart, as the salvation of souls: saying that *He wishes all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* God affirms the same by the mouth of the Prophet Ezechiel, in these words: *I will not the death of a sinner, but that he be converted and live.* Since, then, our God is so kind, so merciful, so loving of our souls, let us take all care of the salvation of our brethren, let us be full of zeal for souls, if we want to do something pleasing to our Maker.§

359. The holy Doctor proceeds to establish this truth by the words God spoke through the mouth of Jeremias: *If you separate*

* Secundo, ratione ejus cui subvenitur, quia spiritus nobilior est corpore.

† Tertio, quantum ad ipsos actus quibus subvenitur proximo, quia spirituales actus sunt nobiliores corporalibus, qui sunt quodammodo serviles. 2, 2, quæst. 32, art. 3.

‡ Ut anima corpore melior est, ita iis, qui indigentibus pecunias, et facultates suppeditant, majoribus præmiis digni sunt illi, qui admonendo, et continue docendo, in viam rectam supinos et desides inducunt, monstrando eis divinarum virtutum fragrantiam, et vitiorum maleolentiam. Hom. 3, in Gen.

§ Nihil ita gratum est Deo, et ita curæ, ut animarum salus, sicut clamat Apostolus, dicens: *Qui vult omnes homines salvos fieri, et ad agnitionem*

*what is precious from what is vile, you shall be as My mouth.** Reflecting on this emphatic expression, the Saint asks himself wherein consists the separation of the precious from the worthless, which likens a man to the face of God; and he replies that this separation is nothing else but rescuing souls (which are of all things in this world the most precious) from guilt (which is the vilest of things) by using our best endeavours to turn them from vice to virtue, from the darkness of sin to the light of truth. "Whoso does this," continues the Saint, "is likened to the face of God, in so far as he imitates the Divine Goodness, and he becomes conformable thereto in so far as human nature can resemble the Divine. And to tell the truth, what has God left undone to rescue us from sin and everlasting ruin? He came down from Heaven, put on the garment of our mortality, submitted to every ignominy and hardship, even to death on the tree of infamy. If, then, God, Who by nature is incomprehensible and unspeakable, submitted to such hardships for our salvation, what ought we not to do to deliver our neighbour from the power of the demon, to draw him out of the road to perdition, and lead him back to the path of virtue and of Paradise; thus retracing within ourselves some lineaments of God's immense goodness, and rendering ourselves in some degree like unto His Divine countenance?" All these are very solid arguments, and by means of them the holy Doctor establishes his assertion, that nothing is more agreeable to God than to labour for the salvation of souls.†

veritatis venire. Ut iterum Deus ipse ait: *Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut convertatur, et vivat.* . . . Talem igitur habentes Dominum, tam misericordem tam benignum, cum nostri, tum fratrum nostrorum curam geramus. In eâdem Hom.

* Si separaveris pretiosum a vili, quasi os meum eris. Jerem. xv. 19.

† Et ut scias, quantum bonum sit cum salute nostrâ et alios lucrari, audi prophetam ex personâ Dei dicentem: *Qui educit pretiosum a vili, quasi os meum erit.* Quid hoc est? Qui ab errore ad veritatem, ait, manuduxerit, vel a peccato ad virtutem proximum induxerit, quantum homini licet, me imitatur. Etenim ipse, cum Deus sit, propter nihil aliud nostram induit carnem, et alia humana omnia sustinuit (quandoquidem crucem quoque suscepit), quam ut nos peccato obnoxios a maledicto liberaret. Et hoc quoque Paulus clamat dicens: *Christus nos redemit a maledicto legis, factus pro nobis ma-*

360. This doctrine of the Golden-mouthed Saint chimes in admirably with the well-known dictum of the Areopagite; "that of all divine things, the most godlike is to co-operate with God in the conversion of sinners;"* for this it is which most likens us to God, Whose infinite goodness makes Him supremely desirous of our salvation, and consequently renders us most deiform, most godlike, and even most divine by means of this co-operation.† Hence St Gregory the Great could truly say, that no sacrifice can be more acceptable to God than to labour with genuine zeal for the saving of souls.‡ Since in very deed one single soul has cost the Son of God more than the whole universe. He had but to elicit a single act of His will, and the heavens, the earth, the mountains, the planets, the sun, the stars were created. But the salvation of even one soul has cost Him blood-shedding, stripes, anguish, torments, and a most cruel death.

361. St Bonaventure, in his life of St Francis of Assisi, relates, that the Saint, doubting whether he should intermit his daily contemplation, in order to devote himself to the salvation of his neighbour by means of preaching, wished first to take the opinions of his brethren. Setting before them the advantages and disadvantages of both the active and contemplative life, he began by saying, "In the contemplative life, it seems to me, we can attain to great detachment of heart, to a singular purity of conscience, and to the closest union with the Sovereign Good. On the other hand, preaching begets distractions, diverting the mind from heavenly things; from it results a certain relaxation in the severity of discipline, and the soul often returns from it covered with the dust of some imperfections. In contemplation, we converse with the Angels, we speak to God in holy solitude;

ledictum. Si igitur ipse, qui Deus est ineffabilis essentiæ, ob misericordiam ineffabilem omnia propter nos, et salutem nostram suscepit; cur non et nos erga fratres justi sumus; agnoscentesque eos ut membra nostra, et eripientes ex diaboli faucibus in viam virtutis inducimus? In eâdem Hom.

* Divinorum omnium divinissimum est cooperari Deo in conversione peccatorum. De Cœl. Hier., cap. 3.

† Divinorum omnium divinissimum.

‡ Nullum omnipotenti Deo tale est sacrificium, quale est zelus animarum. Hom. 12, in Ezech.

so that we lead the life of Angels rather than of men. In preaching we come into contact with men, meeting them, speaking to them, having long intercourse with them; the result of which is a life more human than angelic. Nevertheless," concludes the Saint, "in preaching we find an advantage which preponderates over all the privileges of the contemplative life, and it is this: the Son of God, for the salvation of our souls, came down from the bosom of His Father to this miserable earth, to teach us poor mortals, by His word and example, the way to Heaven. Wherefore it seems to me that preaching must be more acceptable to God, as having been chosen by His Divine Son; and that I shall be doing a thing more pleasing to Him by interrupting the sweet repose of contemplation and going forth to toil for the salvation of my neighbour."* This is the very ground on which the Holy Fathers quoted above take their stand, when they say that the charity which is practised for the spiritual welfare of souls, deifies us—that is, likens us to God, Who labours so much for the good of souls—and that, therefore, nothing can be more pleasing in His sight.

362. The reader may now understand the import of those words of St Ignatius of Loyola, that if it were given him to choose whether he would forthwith mount up to Heaven, or remain on earth serving God and labouring for the salvation of souls, he would choose to live on, even with the uncertainty of his everlasting salvation.† He knew full well how dearly God loves our souls, how much He has suffered and yearned for our salvation; and, therefore, by an act of heroic charity, he preferred the salvation of others to the assured possession of his own eternal bliss. This too, was the motive for which St Dunstan actually refused to go to Heaven on the Feast of the Ascension of our

* Sed unum videtur præponderare his omnibus ante Deum, quod unigenitus Dei Filius propter animarum salutem de sinu Patris descendit, ut suo mundum informans exemplo verbum salutis hominibus loqueretur: et ideo videtur magis Deo placitum, quod intermissâ quiete, foras egrediar ad laborem. S. Bonav., in Vitâ S. Franc., cap. 12.

† Si optio daretur, malle se beatitudinis incertum vivere, et interim Deo inservire, et proximorum saluti, quam certum ejusdem gloriæ statim mori. Brev. Rom. in Festo S. Ign., 31 Julii.

Lord, upon which day a heavenly embassy invited Him to glory.*

363. The holy Archbishop was absorbed on the eve of this festival in devout prayer, when he beheld a multitude of Angels, clad in garments whiter than snow, enter the church, bearing on their heads crowns shining with brightness, and surrounded from head to foot with the most ravishing splendour. He saw them all standing before him in brilliant array, and he heard them, while bending towards him, greet him with the words: *Hail! dear Dunstan, hail!* Then they delivered to him the most happy and joyful tidings that mortal man can possibly receive from above; he heard them assure him, that they were sent from God to bid him come, if so disposed, to celebrate with them in Heaven the triumph of the risen Saviour, and to take possession of that glory after which he had so long and so earnestly yearned. The reader would surely have imagined that Dunstan would not have been able to find words wherewith to reply to so joyful a summons, but that his soul, parting company with his body, would have committed itself with a longing sigh into the hands of those heavenly messengers. Yet it was quite otherwise: the Saint refused, and boldly replied, that on that solemn day the love of his neighbour bound him to remain on earth, to break the Bread of Angels to the faithful, and the Word of God to His people. I can fancy that on their return to Heaven, these blessed spirits astonished the whole of Paradise, by relating how they had visited on earth, one so closely bound to his neighbour by the sacred ties of charity, that he could not bring himself to leave his exile in order to return to his heavenly home. If we cannot reach so sublime a height of charity, let us at least endeavour—if there burn within our hearts one single spark of love for God, to Whom souls are so dear—to do all the good we can to the souls of others, as far as our puny strength permits.

* Vinc. Bellov., lib. xxiv., cap. 94.

CHAPTER VII.

THAT FRATERNAL CORRECTION IS A SPIRITUAL WORK OF MERCY: HOW IT IS TO BE PRACTISED.

364. Among the spiritual works of mercy, the correction of our erring brethren does not, assuredly, occupy the lowest place. Nay, if we rely on the word of the Angelic Doctor St Thomas Aquinas, it is an act of such perfect charity, that it is to be preferred to the relief of the poor in his bodily needs, and to the care given to the sick in their bodily ailments.* Whence he infers that fraternal correction, in certain circumstances, is laid upon us by precept, and binds us under a grievous obligation to procure the amendment of others.† And, in truth, if that man transgresses the laws of charity, who, having it in his power to succour a neighbour, mortally wounded in his bodily members, leaves him to perish miserably; who can deny that charity is violated, if, beholding a brother's soul festering with the grievous wound of some mortal sin, he neglect to come to his aid by brotherly and seasonable admonition? St Augustine, most certainly, will not be the person to deny this, since he teaches that by omitting such correction we become worse than the delinquents, and that our silence is more blameworthy than their sin. The Saint grounds his opinion on the strict command laid upon us by our Saviour Himself.‡

365. St John Chrysostom explains this important doctrine by the parable of the listless servant, who buried his talent, instead

* Correctio fraterna est actus caritatis potior quam curatio infirmitatis corporalis, vel subventio quâ excluditur exterior egestas. 2, 2, quæst. 33, art. 1.

† Correctio fraterna ordinatur ad fratris emendationem, et ideo hoc modo cadit sub præcepto, secundum quod est necessaria ad istum finem; non autem ita, quod quolibet loco vel tempore, frater delinquens corrigatur. Eädem Quæst. art. 2.

‡ Si peccaverit in te frater tuus, corripe eum inter te, et ipsum solum. Matth. xviij. 15. Si neglexeris, pejor es. Ille injuriam fecit, et injuriam faciendo, gravi seipsum vulnere percussit. Tu vulnus fratris tui contemnis, tu vides eum perire, vel periisse, et negligis? Pejor es tacendo, quam ille conviciando. De Verbis Domini, Serm. 16, cap. 4.

of employing it for the advantage of others. "If," writes this Holy Father, "the wicked servant is threatened by his lord with severe chastisement, for not having shared with his neighbour the talent entrusted to him, far more intolerable will be the punishment of him who, though able to give some admonition to his sinful brother, is not willing to do so. In the case of the servant in the Gospel, the question was one of procuring with money some food for the body: in the case with which we are now concerned, the question is one of giving life to the soul. In the parable, the matter in hand was delivering our neighbour by kindly offices from temporal death; but here, everlasting death is the fatal issue." *

366. To give greater urgency to his reasoning, the Saint replies to the excuses put forward by some persons with the object of exempting themselves from fraternal correction. But, you will allege, I have not sufficient eloquence to persuade my neighbour, and to bring him to a better sense. To this the Saint replies, "It is not eloquence, but charity that is required. If, for instance, you know that your friend has fallen into the sin of fornication, you should say to him with firmness, 'Unhappy man, do you not see that you are doing wrong? are you not ashamed? do you not blush?' Methinks I hear your reply, 'He is well aware of the heinousness of the sin he commits, and needs not my admonition to know it.' True," replies the holy Doctor, "but the unhappy man is carried away by passion, and stands in need of somebody to hold him in check. A sick man is likewise perfectly conscious that cold water in the heat of fever is injurious to his health, and yet he needs some one to prevent his taking it; for when we are under the empire of some disordered appetite, we have not sufficient control over ourselves, but stand in need of some one who may serve us as a bridle and restraint. If he make no account of your warning, do not lose heart, keep your eye upon

* Si habenti pecunias, et non largienti, supplicium Dominus comminatur; ei qui valet proximum commonere; vel quolibet modo, et minime facit, quomodo non majoribus suppliciis punietur? Illic enim corpus nutritur, hic autem anima. Illic a morte servas temporali, hic vero ab æternâ. Hom. 30, in Epist. ad Hebr.

him, watch whither he goes, and use every means to deter him from his criminal purpose. Your earnest endeavours may, perchance, succeed in inspiring him with fear, and make him yield; and thus you will have won your lost brother back to God." * This earnest and pressing appeal may serve to prove the great obligation incumbent on us all to correct our brethren, and may also show that to omit this charge out of heedlessness, or from motives of human respect, is a great transgression of Christian charity.

367. And here, with St Augustine, let me observe that "he is not exempt from fault, who, though not set over the delinquent, neglects, out of mere human respect and fear of giving offence, to admonish him when occasion arises." † The reason is given in the Book of Ecclesiasticus: *To every man has God given charge of his neighbour.*‡ It belongs, consequently, not alone to Superiors, but to all men indiscriminately, to make efforts for the amendment of our neighbour. "True it is," adds this great Doctor, "that Superiors are more strictly bound to such correction, seeing that they are held to it, in reason of their charge, by the twofold title of charity and of justice; and that if they fail in this duty, they will have to render a most strict and rigorous account of the sins of others. This results plainly from those words of God, uttered by the Prophet Ezechiel: *If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his*

* Sed non habeo, inquis, sermonem. Sed non opus est sermone et eloquentiâ. Si videris amicum fornicantem, dic ad eum: Rem malam agis, non erubescis? non confunderis? malum hoc est. Quid autem? inquis. Ipse malum esse illud opus non ignorat. Ita est, sed cupiditate pertrahitur. Nam et qui in ægritudine detinetur, scit vere, quia frigida aqua malum est, si potetur; verumtamen opus habet qui eum prohibeat. Nam cum quis in passione detinetur, non facile sibi solus ipse sufficiet. Oportet igitur te, qui salvus es, ad ulterius medicinam operam tuam conferre. Et si verbis tuis non obediat, interim custodi, intuere quo pergit, et contine a maligno negotio; fortasse enim reverebitur. Eadem Hom.

† Nec ab hujusmodi culpâ penitus alienus est, qui licèt præpositus non sit, in eis tamen, quibus vitæ necessitate conjungitur, multa monenda, vel arguenda novit, et negligit, devitans eorum offensionem. De Civit. Dei, lib. i., cap. 6.

‡ Mandavit (Deus) unicuique de proximo suo. Ecclus. xvij. 12.

*iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.** By the watchmen," continues the Saint, "we are to understand Superiors, especially if Ecclesiastics, to whom it belongs to watch over the behaviour of their subjects with a view to this correction. If, from their not rebuking the sins of their people, any loss of souls results, God will exact of them a most rigid account." † And in fact, the High-priest Heli was deprived of his priesthood, lost the ark and his two sons, and even (as some conjecture) his soul, not for his personal faults, but for the sins which he had neglected to correct in his family.‡

368. But a greater difficulty occurs with reference to the manner in which such correction is to be meted out, in order to be both charitable and advantageous. For just as medicine, dispensed in fitting doses and in due time, works recovery; so, if it be administered without measure and out of season, it causes death. And in like manner correction duly and seasonably given, communicates life to the soul; while, if fitting time and manner be not observed, it causes death. How many have been rescued from their ruin by a timely warning? But what numbers has an indiscreet reproof hardened in their headlong course?

369. Wherefore, just as drugs, in order to heal bodily ailments, must have, some a lenitive, others an irritating effect, according to the constitution of different bodies and the nature of the disease, so too, correction, in order to be profitable to the soul, must at one time be mild, at another sharp; now gentle and calm, at other times harsh and severe. St Augustine, whom I have already cited on this point, sets before us these different ways in which we should administer reprimand; and he says that every Christian should be fired with zeal for the honour of God's house, that is, for the salvation of our fellow men, of whom this divine building

* Ezech. xxxiii. 6.

† Quâ in re non utique parem, sed longe graviorem habent causam, quibus per prophetam dicitur: *Ille quidem in suo peccato morietur, sanguinem autem ejus de manu speculatoris requiram.* Ad hoc enim speculatores, hoc est populorum præpositi, constituti sunt in ecclesiis, ut non parcant objurgando peccata. Eod. loco.

‡ Eo quod noverat indigne agere filios, et non corripuerit eos. I. Reg. iij. 13.

is constructed. "If, for instance," he writes, "you see your brother hurrying off to immodest plays, dissuade him from entering, admonish, show your concern; if so be that the flame of holy zeal for God's house be kindled within you. If you behold others going to drink to excess, or repairing, peradventure, in a state of intoxication to sacred places; hinder them effectually if you are able, if not, terrify them by threats or, if this be unsuitable, win them by mild words. Use every art, give yourself no rest. Moreover, if the offender be a personal friend of your own, admonish him with kindness; if your wife, deter her with severity; if your servant, restrain her by punishments; in a word, you must adapt yourself to the circumstances of each individual."*

370. But as the kind of correction which is usually the most effectual for the amendment of others, is that which is administered with gentleness, every one must employ this means to begin with; for, as St Ambrose teaches: "A loving admonition is usually of greater avail than an angry rebuke;† because the former moves to humble shame, while the latter provokes to indignation.‡ Is it not better," says the Saint, "that he whom you take upon yourself to correct should esteem you his friend on beholding you mild and meek, rather than take you for an enemy on seeing you in a violent passion with him.§ And is it not evident that the citadel of our neighbour's heart is more easily taken by conciliating and gentle counsel, than stormed by injurious reproaches?"‖

371. The following story will help to confirm the view taken

* Unumquemque christianum zelus domus Dei comedat. Verbi gratiâ, vides fratrem currere ad theatrum? prohibe, mone, contristare, si zelus domûs Dei comedit te. Vides alios currere, et inebriari velle, et hoc velle in locis sanctis, quod nusquam decet? prohibe quos potes, tene quos potes, terre quos potes; quibus potes, blandire; noli quiescere. Tamen si amicus est, admoneatur leniter: uxor est, severissime refrænetur: ancilla est, etiam verberibus compescatur. Tract. x. in Joan.

† Plus proficit amica correctio, quam accusatio turbulenta. Lib. viij. in Luc., cap. 18.

‡ Illa pudorem incutit; hæc indignationem movet.

§ Bonum quippe est, ut amicum magis te, qui corripitur, credat, quam inimicum.

‖ Facilius enim consiliis acquiescitur, quam injuriæ succumbitur.

by St Ambrose, and to induce the reader to make use of persuasive methods in correcting the failings of others. If the narrative be somewhat longer than usual, I trust that it may not on this account be less profitable to my readers.* A brother of the hermit Abram died, as he had lived, in the world, and left behind him a little girl of scarce seven years of age. The relatives seeing the child left an orphan, took her to her uncle the hermit, that he might have care of her. The holy man, moved by charity, received the child into his keeping, and gave her a home in a room communicating with his own cell by a small window. Here he instructed her how to read the Psalter, was her guide in the practice of every virtue, taught her the art of prayer, sang psalms with her by night, and entertained her for hours together in spiritual converse. The child continued for twenty whole years in so holy a life. But the devil, unable to bear with the great progress which she was constantly making in the path of perfection, began to lay secret snares against her virtue by means of a monk, unworthy of the name, who, having fallen in love with her, came to call upon the hermit Abram under spiritual pretences, but in reality for the sole purpose of seducing his niece, and bending her to his own base purposes. At last this foul kite succeeded in luring the guileless dove from her nest, and in blighting the white lily of her virginity. The unhappy girl, on returning to her cell, thought of her shameful fall, and gave way to a paroxysm of grief. She tore off the sackcloth in which she was clad, struck her breast a thousand times, mangled her face, but, instead of casting herself with trust into the bosom of God's mercy, she threw herself into the depths of despair. Who would have the heart, she said to herself, to appear thus defiled before God? How can I have the face to present myself, unclean as I am, before my saintly uncle? What shall I do, miserable wretch? Whither can I go? But I know what I must do; as there is now no hope of salvation for me, I will forthwith steal away unobserved to the city, and live by my shame in a house of infamy, and with the wages of my sin I will support my most miserable life. No sooner said than done. Meanwhile, God set the following vision before

* In Vitis PP.—Vita S. Abram Eremitæ.

Abram in a dream. He saw a poisonous dragon come into his cell, and seize upon a snow-white dove, devour it, and then slink off to hide in its den. The servant of God awoke, thought, reflected, and was horror-struck; yet could not make out the meaning of the vision. He tried to go to sleep again, when, on a sudden, there was the baleful monster crawling into his cell. Scarce had the reptile come near his feet, than it burst asunder, and from its jaws came forth alive the dove it had seized, which flew at once towards the hermit, and settled on his hands. Abram arose and, enlightened by a ray from on high, understood that the hapless dove was his own niece. He lifted up his voice, called for her repeatedly, but received no answer. Then he burst open the lattice, sought everywhere, and discovered that the damsel had fled. A miser could not grieve more at the loss of the chest containing his store, than did this saintly old man on finding himself robbed of the niece in whom he had laid up such stores of spiritual wealth. He wept, moaned, sighed, but without avail; he sought, inquired, ran everywhere, but could get no clue to her new abode. At length, after two years of mourning, of tears, and fruitless search, he got to know the town and the house where she was living, and the infamous trade she was plying. Now we come to the point of the story which presents us with the mildest and most gentle correction that Christian Charity could possibly exercise in order to bring back to God a strayed lamb. Pay attention to the course the holy hermit resolved upon. He took off his usual garment of sackcloth, and put on a military uniform; and concealing as best he could his head and face, so as not to be recognised, started on horseback for the city, where his ill-starred niece was living the life of a public prostitute. On reaching it, he went straight to the owner of the house in which she dwelt. He besought the landlord to introduce him to the beautiful girl who was lodging with him, and to let him sup with her once; and, in order to remove every objection, put into his hands a large sum as prepayment of the supper he had ordered. The wretched man closed with the bargain, and led him to the girl's apartment. It was no less than a miracle that, on beholding her, Abram did not die of grief. He saw (Heavens, what a sight!)

the head that had heretofore been covered with a coarse veil, now decked with flowers and jewels; the frame that had been clothed in sackcloth, now adorned with a vain and costly dress; the devout pallor of her countenance had given place to unblushing effrontery; the modesty of her downcast eyes was succeeded by bold and wanton looks. He was, however, able to check his heartbreaking sorrow, to withhold the tears which welled up to his eyes, and to feign cheerfulness. He supped quite merrily with the landlord, without letting slip a single word that savoured of spirituality. After the supper, the Saint made some transparent excuse for taking his niece back to her room and, when they were alone, he removed from his head and countenance what had hitherto disguised his features, and taking her by the hand, burst into tears, saying, "Mary, my dear Child, do you not know me? Have you then forgotten me, my soul's delight? You see in me the person who fed you for so many years on the milk of piety. Who has slain you, my dear Daughter; who has struck the fatal blow?* Where is the angelic habit you wore? Where are your prayers, your watchings, your penances, your tears? How came you to fall from the height of perfection into such an abyss of misery? Why, dearest Child, when you were led into sin, did you not at once come and discover your fault to me? I would have done penance for you; I would have paid the penalty of your sin. Who is there that is sinless, save God alone?"† The girl, on beholding the countenance of her uncle, and hearing these words, grew pale and cold and, losing both colour and strength, fell in a swoon to the ground. Then the holy Solitary, bathing her with hot tears, went on repeating, "Why do you not answer, my Daughter; will you not speak to me, my soul's treasure; on my head be thy sins. I will make to God due satisfaction for them. I will answer to Him for thee." He thus continued till midnight, exhorting her with words and tears of tenderness. When at last she had recovered somewhat from

* Filia mea, Maria, non me agnoscis? Viscera mea: nonne ego sum, qui te nutrivi? Quis, filia mea, te interfecit?

† Quare, dulcissima filia, cum peccâsti, non mihi illico retulisti? et ego pro et pœnitentiam egissem. Quis sine peccato est, nisi solus Deus?

her fainting fit, she exclaimed, "I have not the courage ever to look you again in the face, after having so cruelly betrayed you, nor have I the heart to return to God, now that I have so wickedly forsaken Him." "In that case," replied the saintly old man, "I take upon myself the entire charge of all your iniquities. I ask of God to call me, instead of you, to account for your sins. All I beg of you is to come back with me to your cell."* Encouraged by this gentle speech, the poor girl promised to comply, and for the rest of the night lay prostrate at her good uncle's feet, weeping bitterly over her crimes. The next morning, at break of day, he put his niece on horseback, and preceding her on foot, returned with her to his solitude. The old man went on his way full of glee, and jumping about for very joy, just as a soldier who returns from a victorious campaign laden with spoil. On reaching the desert, he lodged his niece in her former cell, and kept watch and ward over her in his own. Here she once more put on sackcloth, and spent the remainder of her days in the most austere penance. She was constantly in tears, and had so lively a contrition of her past sins, that she awakened with her sobs and moans the echoes of all that forest. Not only did God pardon all her sins, but made that pardon manifest by means of the many miraculous cures He wrought through her instrumentality. The saintly old man Abram lived for ten years after this conversion of his niece. She survived him only five years, and at her death appeared so bright and luminous to the eyes of the bystanders, that they could not gaze on her countenance without being dazzled.

372. Now we may make the following reflections on our story. If St Abram, on hearing of his niece's ruin, had followed her armed with a stick, and begun to beat her, as she richly deserved for the disgrace she had brought upon God and on himself; or had he cast in her teeth her shameful course of life, with bitter reproofs, think you that he would ever have effected so goodly a conversion? I am quite certain that the affrighted girl would have fled from him with more horror than from the sight of a venomous

* Super me sit iniquitas tua, filia mea: ex meis manibus Deus hoc peccatum requirat. Tantùm veni mecum, et redi ad locum tuum.

serpent, and would have rushed headlong into still lower depths of wickedness. Instead of which, by gentleness, by compassion, by love, he softened her heart, won her over to his purpose, and thus wrought a conversion that will be memorable to the end of time. Let us, then, follow the advice of St John Chrysostom, where he says, "If you wish to correct your brother, take him aside, and with heartfelt affection admonish him, exhort him, give him wholesome counsel. With such love did St Paul correct offenders, as appears from his epistles. Let us in like manner open to the sinner the bowels of charity, and persuade him that if we admonish him, it is not to play the censor or to put him to shame, but only to guide and to cure him. Let us embrace his feet, clasp him to our bosom, kiss him lovingly. We must not be ashamed of these tokens of affection, if we wish to heal him. In such wise do physicians deal with patients who loathe their medicines. By coaxing and kindness they get them to swallow the nauseous draughts."*

373. Nevertheless, severity in rebuke is at times useful and proper, as I have already hinted. The selfsame Apostle who exhorts us to deal with the erring in the spirit of meekness,† orders us, in another passage, to rebuke such with bitter reproaches.‡ So that it is necessary to distinguish those cases in which it behoves us, in the correction of delinquents, to employ the suavity of meekness, from those other cases in which the vigour of truth is more likely to insure a remedy.

374. And first, we must make use of severe measures whensoever gentler methods fail of obtaining the desired effect. It then becomes necessary to alter the treatment, and since mild

* Vis fratrem corrigere? Lacryma, ora Deum; ex corde apprehensum admone, consule, exhortare. Sic et Paulus faciebat: *Ne iterum, cum venero, humiliet me Deus propter vos, et lugeam multos ex his, qui ante peccaverunt.* . . Declara caritatem erga peccatorem: persuade ipsi, quod consulens, et curans, non traducere volens, ipsum commonefacis. Comprehende pedes, osculari non erubescas, si modo mederi vis. Hæc et medici faciunt, sæpius difficiles ægrotos habentes, deosculantes, rogantes, persuadent salutarem sumere medicinam. Hom. 3 ad Popul. Antioch.

† Et si præoccupatus fuerit homo in aliquo delicto, vos, qui spirituales estis hujusmodi instruite in spiritu lenitatis. Ad Galat. vj. 1.

‡ Argue, obsecra, increpa. II. Tim. iv. 2.

remedies are of none avail with certain constitutions, and even —as may sometimes happen—are positively hurtful, reason requires that we deal with such somewhat harshly. St Bernard discovers this diversity of method in the correction of transgressors, in the parable of the luckless traveller who, after being wounded by robbers, was healed by the kind Samaritan pouring oil and wine into his wounds. In the oil, the Saint recognises the symbol of the suavity of meekness; in the wine, he discerns the type of the vigour and severity of an ardent zeal. To heal the wounds of certain guilty persons, you must apply the soothing oil of mildness, but others require the wine of severity. If you see that your subject or brother, wounded with some sin, does not amend after repeated and mild admonitions, but on the contrary turns to bad account the oil of your gentle counsel, growing more and more guilty, you must use stronger and sharper remedies, and must pour into his heart the wine of compunction. You must treat him with stern rebuke and harsh reproach; and if the case need it and his obduracy be great, it must be subdued with the rod of ecclesiastical censures.*

375. "How are you to deal with an unruly son who makes no account of your rebukes?" asks St Augustine. "Are you not to chastise him, must you not beat him? If your servant is leading a loose life, should you not," he continues, "hold him in check by stripes or other chastisements? Assuredly you should. The contumacious must be punished, nor should the scourge be

* Quia vero, vulnera illius, qui incidit in latrones, et jumento corporis pii Samaritani Ecclesiæ est deportatus in stabulum, non in solo oleo, sed in vino simul et oleo, sanitatem recipiunt; necessarium habet spiritualis medicus etiam vinum fervidi zeli cum oleo mansuetudinis, cui sane convenit non modo consolari pusillanimes, sed et corripere inquietos. Si enim viderit illum qui vulneratus est, id est, qui peccavit, blandis, aut lenibus hortamentis, quæ in eum prærogata sunt, minime emendatum, magis autem forte etiam abutentem suâ mansuetudine, et patientiâ negligentiorem fieri, et in peccato suo etiam securius obdormire, frustrato tam suavium oleo monitorum, oportebit sane mordacioribus uti medicamentis, et vinum compunctionis infundere, duris videlicet cum eo increpationibus, atque invectionibus agere: et si causa requirit, et duritia tanta est, etiam censuræ ecclesiasticæ baculo percellere contemptorem. In Cant. Serm. 44.

spared. Not only is this the will of God, but He rebukes those who neglect to follow this method." *

376. Another case which calls for reprehension joined with rigour, is when the guilty person is of a stubborn, rough, and boorish character, and cannot be acted upon by the sweet attractiveness of friendly affection. There are some whose heart is, so to speak, covered with hide rather than skin; and it is most difficult, I will not say to wound these persons with the darts of sincere love, but even to prick them ever so lightly. To penetrate such hardened hearts, and to touch them to the quick, sharp and cutting words are needed; biting words, which shall go into them like barbed arrows. This is the lesson conveyed by the Apostle of the Gentiles to Titus: *The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slothful bellies. . . . Wherefore rebuke them sharply, in order that they may be sound in the faith.*†

377. But in all these cases the Holy Fathers warn us, that while making an outward display of harshness, a Christian must be on his guard not to allow a single drop of the milk of charity to dry up in his heart; for while he clothes himself with severity for the good of his neighbour, this same severity must be an effect of the love which he bears to his brethren. And, indeed, St. Augustine, after showing, in the very text just now quoted, the severity wherewith a father should treat a son, or a master his unruly and stubborn servant, adds forthwith: "Scold, storm, smite, yet so that it be done in the spirit of charity, not in a spirit of vengeance."‡ And St. Gregory affirms that the just man, when chastising severely, does not lose the gentleness of inward charity, because he does not act under the impulse of passion, but under the stimulus of love.§

* Quid enim de luxurioso filio facturus es? non castigabis? Servum et ipsum tuum, si male viventem videris, non pœnâ aliquâ, non verberibus refrænabis? Fiat hoc, fiat; admittit Deus; immo reprehendit, si non fiat. In Psal. cij.

† Cretenses semper mendaces, malæ bestiæ, ventres pigri. Testimonium hoc verum est. Quam ob causam increpa illos dure, ut sani sint in fide. Ad Tit. 12.

‡ Sed animo caritatis fac, non animo ultionis.

§ Justi cum severe corrigunt, internæ dulcedinis gratiam non amittunt, Moral., lib. xxiv. cap. 10.

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT CHARITY SOLICITOUS FOR THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF OTHERS, IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF PRIESTS, AND ESPECIALLY OF SUCH AS HAVE CARE OF SOULS.

378. THE correction of our neighbour, after he has fallen into any fault, is an office of charity, to which all are bound by the commandment left us by Jesus Christ. To use special industry to prevent their neighbour from transgressing, to help him rapidly onward in the way of God's commandments, and to the attainment of everlasting salvation, is an obligation specially binding on priests, more particularly on those among them who have care of souls; and hence such are bound to attend to the salvation of others, not alone from a motive of charity, but also on the ground of strict justice. Such are bishops, parish-priests, and all who have charge of souls. Others again, are bound to apply themselves to this charitable occupation by their profession. Such are all members of Religious Orders, whose Institute has for its scope the salvation of souls. All these are grievously wanting to their duty, if they fail to devote themselves to the practice of this spiritual charity.

379. St Peter, the chief pastor of the Christian flock, and head over all priests, being asked by Christ if he loved Him, made answer, *Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.* Our Saviour's answer showed that Peter was to give proof of his love by feeding His lambs and His sheep.* A second time our Lord asked Peter this same question; and a second time the Apostle repeated his protestation of love. Then our Blessed Saviour charged Peter a second time to feed His beloved flock; and this was repeated a third time. "But," asks St John Chrysostom, "was it not enough for Christ to have committed once the feeding of His flock to the Prince of the Apostles; wherefore thrice repeat the charge? It was," replies the Saint, "to show us His intense eagerness for the

* Simon Joannis, amas me plus his? . . . Pasce oves meas. Joan. xxj. 15.

welfare of our souls, and to teach us that the highest proof of love that can be shown by a priest, who is a successor of St Peter, is to feed them with anxious solicitude."*

380. The holy Doctor adds a further comment most suitable to our present purpose. "Our Saviour," he continues, "might have said to St Peter, If you love Me more than all the others, as a proof of your singular affection, keep long fasts, sleep on the bare ground, watch throughout whole nights; or He might have said, Be a shield and a protection to the oppressed, a tender father to the orphan, a defender of the desolate widow. But no, our Saviour did not choose to speak this language, because all such proofs of love can be shown by persons in the world, and even by women. Jesus Christ simply said, *Feed My lambs*, for He required of Peter a proof of love proper only to such as hold His place in the care of His flock.† A priest, consequently, may do what he will; he may wear himself out in watchings, fastings, in long and wearisome pilgrimages; he may score his flesh with scourges, flay it with hair shirts, torture it with all sorts of austerities; he will never give his Lord so great a proof of love as by labouring unceasingly with Christ in saving His beloved sheep.

381. But though there be many pastures by which the spiritual life of Christ's sheep is sustained, all may in the main be reduced to these two; the food of the divine Word, and the food of the holy Sacraments. No doubt can be entertained but that one of the most abundant pastures, and that which gives the most plentiful nourishment to souls, is the Word of God, since it enlightens the minds of its hearers with the knowledge of supernatural truths, and kindles in them devout affections, whether horror of sin or love of virtue, whereby souls are withdrawn from the ways of

* Ter interrogat, et semper idem præcipit, ut ostenderet quanti ovium suarum curam faciat, et quod maximum hoc sit amoris argumentum. Hom. 87 in cap. xxj. Joan.

† Illi quidem licebat verbis hujusmodi Petrum affari: Si me amas, Petre, jejunia exerce, supra nudam humum dormi, vigila continenter, injuriâ pressis patrocinare, orphanis patrem te exhibe, viduæ item te maritorum loco habeant. Nunc vero prætermissis omnibus his, quidnam ille ait? *Pasce oves meas.* Nam quæ modo a me dicta sunt, ea complures etiam ex subditis præstare facile possunt, non viri solum, sed etiam fœminæ. De Sacerd., lib. ij.

vice, and set upon the right path of salvation. Wherefore St Gregory says that God comes down to visit our minds with His lights, and to kindle them with His heavenly motions when He finds them predisposed by exhortations, by preaching, and by profitable instruction.* Hence, all the care of God's ministers should consist in cultivating the minds of the faithful by wholesome advice duly adapted to their wants; by private spiritual converse; by public sermons directed to the instruction of the simple; and by discourses in the pulpit suited to withdraw sinners from their evil habits and to excite the good and well-disposed to the love of virtue.

382. And here we may introduce St Gregory deploring a misfortune common to his own and our age, that the harvest in the field of holy Church is so plentiful, while the workmen are so few; that the multitude of hearers is so great, but the number of those who speak to them is so small; at least of those who speak in a way calculated to bear fruit in the hearts of others.† "Behold," continues the Saint, with tears in his eyes, "behold the world is full of priests; yet how seldom do we find a true labourer in the Lord's vineyard. Men are willing enough to take upon themselves the priestly office, but are not ready to fulfil the duties of their charge."‡ Nor do the laments of the holy Doctor end here. "What are we doing," he writes, "we pastors of souls; what are we doing, wretched men that we are? We take the wage, yet we are not indefatigable labourers in the field of Holy Church; we enjoy the fruits of ecclesiastical revenues, but without toiling for the benefit of the vineyard of the Lord. Hence it happens that from our sloth a contagion of evil spreads throughout the fold of Christ, and so a large portion of His beloved flock is infected

* Prædicatio prævenit; et tunc ad mentis nostræ habitaculum Dominus venit, quando verba exhortationis præcurrunt; atque per hoc veritas in mente suscipitur. Hom. 17 in Evang.

† Ad messem multam operarii pauci sunt, quod sine gravi mœrore loqui non possumus: quia etsi sunt, qui bona audiant, desunt tamen qui dicant. Eadem Hom.

‡ Ecce mundus sacerdotibus plenus est; sed tamen in messe Dei rarus valde invenitur operator; quia officium quidem sacerdotale suscipimus, sed opus officii non implemus.

by the rot of vice, and perishes miserably."* The holy Doctor concludes, "For God's sake, let us consider what condemnation will be our lot, if living on the offerings of the faithful, we toil not for their souls and their everlasting salvation." †

383. Nor will there be any use in pleading that we have no ability, that we have no learning, that we are not able to do good among the people by word of mouth. For, in the first place, we are bound to acquire knowledge proportionate to our charge; since God, speaking of priests, has declared by the Prophet Osee: *Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee that thou shalt be no priest to Me.*‡ And, secondly, if there exist in us an ardent charity towards our neighbour, and a true zeal for the salvation of souls, this alone, combined with a moderate amount of learning, will suffice to enable us to give them spiritual life and aliment by our discourse. For the grace which moves and quickens the people is bound up with the divine word; and hence, if it chance to be preached in a spirit of charity, it cannot but be fruitful, whether the tongue of the preacher be rude or eloquent.§ The light of faith, upon which the stirring of the affections depends, comes, as the Apostle teaches, from hearing the word of Christ; and the word is indeed the word of Christ when it flows from the inner spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love, of fervour, and of zeal. What learning had St Peter, who, at his first sermon, converted many thousands? None at all. And the Apostles who converted the whole world, what learning had they? No more than St Peter. What was the learning of the Prophets, of those especially who were taken out of the fields, or from their flocks? They had none. What learning had St Francis of

* Sed quid nos (quod tamen sine dolore dicere non possumus) quid nos, O pastores, agimus, qui et mercedem consequimur, et tamen operarii nequaquam sumus? Fructus quippe sanctæ ecclesiæ in stipendio quotidiano percipimus; sed tamen pro æternâ Ecclesiâ minime in prædicatione laboramus.

† Pensemus, cujus damnationis sit, sine labore percipere mercedem laboris. Ecce ex oblatione fidelium vivimus; sed numquid pro animabus fidelium laboramus?

‡ Quia tu scientiam repulisti, repellam te, ne sacerdotio fungaris mihi. Oseæ iv. 6.

§ Fides ex auditu, auditus autem per verbum Christi. Ad Rom. x. 17.

Assisi who, the first time he opened his lips, sanctified all his hearers, since, leaving their homes, they were every one of them bent on becoming his followers, and putting on the religious habit? He had no learning at all. But all these holy men had hearts burning with love and zeal; in a word, they possessed within them the spirit of Christ.

384. A Pagan philosopher was present at the holy Council of Nicæa, who, by the subtlety of his mind, and his logical talent, combated so powerfully the dogmas of our holy religion, that the most learned bishops, and those of their number who were the most deeply versed in philosophical and theological science, were unable to convict him of falsehood. Among the Fathers there was a man, simple and unlearned, it is true, but filled with the Spirit of God. He consented to meet the philosopher, and confined himself to a mere exposition of the truths of the Catholic Faith, in the same style as that adopted in catechising children. For a wonder, the philosopher was nonplussed and silenced. The only reply he could make, was that he acknowledged the truth of all that had been said. "Then," observed the bishop, "if this be so, come with me to the font of Christ; be plunged into the baptismal waters, and become His disciple." At this summons, the philosopher was all at once moved, and followed the good bishop as a lamb would its shepherd: while thus following him, he turned to his disciples and hearers, saying, "As long as the dispute was waged with words, I fought with words; but this man has spoken to me with an inward power, and God Himself, Whom I cannot withstand, has spoken to me by his mouth."* A valid proof this, that to profit our neighbour a fervent tongue avails more than a learned one.

385. But I will say more: it may happen that certain priests, inspired with zeal and charity, may find their very learning a hindrance to the fruitfulness of their preaching; for their lofty, high, and over-polished style; the depth of their thoughts, the subtlety of their reasonings, the too recondite arrangement of their sermons, render their teaching wholly unintelligible, and consequently wholly useless, to the masses: or what is still worse, such

* Euseb., lib. viij. cap. 6.

sublime discourses become, even to those who do understand them, so much the less useful as they are more pleasing. We read in Surius, in the life of St John Chrysostom, that, when this holy Doctor began to preach to the people, he allowed his great mind to carry him somewhat beyond the understanding of the mass of the faithful who listened to his teaching. A woman who came to hear his sermon, with the sincere intent of rapid profit, seeing herself balked of her pious purpose, lifted up her voice, and cried out aloud that the word of the Saint was "unfruitful." The Saint hearing this, and reflecting that the good woman had solid reason for her remark, lowered his style to such a degree, and employed so many popular comparisons, expressions, and figures, that he became intelligible to every one, even to the rudest minds. The priest must then always strive by study to fit himself more and more for his sacred ministry. If, in spite of this, he still find that he has but little talent, he must not lose courage, since, if he have not been gifted with a large mind, he can easily supply the deficiency by the largeness of his heart. But, if he be not very eloquent, he can at least be very zealous; it is enough for him to have an ardent zeal for the salvation of his neighbour. If he have no great store of knowledge, let him be contented with having the desire of doing good to others; but should he, on the contrary, be blessed with talent, eloquence, and much learning, he must husband all in such manner as to make himself understood by all, and thus prove profitable to all.

386. The other kind of food which the priest has to give to his neighbour, consists in the administration of the holy Sacraments. These are the channels of Paradise, through which the grace of God flows into our souls, either to heal them when stricken with mortal sin or to strengthen them when in health. The priest, therefore, cannot do anything so advantageous to the salvation and perfection of his neighbour, as to devote all his energies to apply these wholesome remedies to the souls of his flock. But he should have a special preference for the administration of the Sacrament of Penance, as being the most needful for the faithful who, by Baptism, are already brought into the pale of Holy Church; for as the frailty of men is so great that

they mostly relapse into the same faults, they stand in great need of many a helping hand to heal them quickly with the balm of penance. Other Sacraments are but seldom administered; Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, once only: Matrimony and Extreme Unction, seldom more than once. But the Sacrament of Confession is in constant requisition, as the need of it is continual. Whence the necessity of many ministers who are well affected to its administration. I may add, that in no other Sacrament has the priest so many opportunities of practising charity, zeal, mercy, counsel, patience, and every other virtue; so that while saving the souls of others, he may perfect and enrich his own soul in a singular degree.

CHAPTER IX.

A SHORT AND PRACTICAL COMPENDIUM OF ALL THAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THIS ASCETIC GUIDE FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF DIRECTORS.

387. A GOOD guide, anxious to lead the traveller in safety, must first of all have a definite idea of the term which he is desirous of reaching, in order that he may not wander a step out of his way. He must have an accurate knowledge of the shortest and most direct roads leading to the end of the journey, and of the dangers to be encountered on the way, so that he may be able to avoid them. He must further take care that the traveller be well supplied with the provisions required on his journey, otherwise, instead of being a trusty leader, he would be a blind one, unable to bring the traveller to the place he desires to reach; or, to use the expression of our Lord, one blind man will lead another into the ditch. In this my "Guide to the Spiritual Life," I have made myself a leader to the Confessor, in order that he may, in his turn, be a trusty leader of the souls he purposes to conduct to perfec

tion by his training. In the fourth, and closing Treatise, I have explained the term of Christian Perfection, which is perfect love of God, and perfect love of our neighbour. In the third Treatise, I have pointed out the safe and direct roads leading to this blessed term, and these are the Moral Virtues which adorn the already purified soul. In the second Treatise, I have made known the hindrances to be met with, both within and without ourselves, which clog our footsteps in the path of the Moral Virtues. In the first Treatise, I have set forth the means of which penitents should avail themselves, in order to overcome such obstacles, and to run without let in the path of these virtues, so as to attain the possession of perfect love, which is the very sap and substance of perfection.

388. Wherefore, if the Director wish to render his penitents perfect, he must, at the very outset, keep his eye fixed on the term to which he would guide them, even as a traveller, unless he be mad, settles the term of his journey before starting. This, as we have said and fully proved several times, is perfect charity. Mark, I say *perfect charity*, for the penitent will already possess charity in some lower degree, inasmuch as, being free from mortal guilt—which we always take for granted, otherwise his task would be to set about establishing himself in the substance, before aiming at the perfection, of the Christian law—he will be in a state of grace, and hence have the habit of charity. Now, this charity is susceptible of increase and of indefinite improvements; and it will require much labour before it can be brought to that precise degree of perfection at which it may be called perfect. The penitent will have to make progress in the moral virtues until he can practise them with ease and without repugnance; or if a slight repugnance arise from concupiscence which, in this mortal life, and in our corrupt nature, is never wholly extinct and deadened, he must have reached the point at which it costs him little to overcome it. Having arrived at this prompt and ready practice of virtue, the penitent becomes proximately disposed to practise, with the same ease and readiness, all the acts of the love of God, and the love of his neighbour, and to practise them with earnestness and fervour. This is the very

point in which the perfection of charity, and consequently Christian perfection itself, consists.

389. To rise to this stage of promptness and facility in the practice of virtue, it is absolutely indispensable that we strike down, by unceasing mortification, whatever repugnance arises from the senses and from outer objects, from inward passions and from vicious habits formerly contracted; thus clearing away every obstacle which might stand between us and the attainment of perfection: for these, once removed, virtuous habits are speedily acquired, and we come to that prompt and easy practice of virtue which disposes the soul to perfect charity. This, therefore, is what the Director must first take in hand, and when he intends to lead any one to perfection, his first object must be to get the person to thwart all inordinate inclinations, to mortify every unruly passion, to bridle the senses, to become detached from external objects that have power to entice, such as relatives, riches, and honours; to the end that all these clogs to real progress in virtue being removed, the penitent may begin to practise virtue with complete ease.

390. But here we must beware of delusion. Directors will often meet with beginners, who seem already to have scaled the loftiest heights of perfection, when in truth they have scarce reached the foot of the mountain. He will find them eager for penances, given to mortification, ready to obey, willing to be humbled and to practise other virtues. He might from this be led to imagine that these people have attained the virtues of a purified soul, and that, having only just set foot in the arena, they have already reached the goal of perfection. But in reality they have up to this time acquired no solid virtue; for the ease experienced by them in the practice of virtue arises not from a habit of virtue which they have neither formed, nor even have had time to form; but it springs from a sweet and sensible grace, lulling their passions, spurring them on, and rendering them prompt to do good. Virtue, properly understood, is a facility engendered in the soul by acts of virtue constantly repeated, and by such acts especially as overcome the reluctance and opposition of frail nature to the practice of virtue. Now this sort of facility cannot really exist in

beginners, who have not as yet overcome and mortified themselves much, and are not yet thoroughly exercised in the practice of virtuous actions.

391. Wherefore all the means spoken of in the first Treatise, should be employed to overcome the passions, to mortify all the senses, to detach the affections from outward objects which hinder us from perfection; nor are we to imitate certain devout souls, who spend their time in long prayers, frequent the Sacraments, profess a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin, read pious books, have a fixed Director, and yet seek nothing else in all this, but the awakening and gratification of pious feelings and sensibilities. When they attain to this they fancy they have done everything; if they fail of this, they imagine that they have done nothing. They mistake, because if means are to be means in more than name, they must be directed to the end, and the end of the means recommended in this book is to overcome by their instrumentality the obstacles to a virtuous life—obstacles which are found within us, and all around us. It is simply to conquer these difficulties, to be able by this victory to practise the moral virtues with ready ease, and finally, to attain through the exercise of these virtues, the possession of perfect charity.

392. The Director is therefore to take care that beginners firmly and effectually resolve in their mental prayer to thwart their perverse inclinations, to detach their hearts from all earthly things, to direct their petitions to this end, continually asking it of God, to make this alone their object in frequenting the Sacraments, in devout reading, in their devotions to the Saints, and to the Queen of Saints, in their dependence on their Directors, and so on of all the other means enumerated. Nevertheless, the Director must proceed in this warfare against the obstacles to perfection with method and system, beginning by what is most easy, and at first attending chiefly to the mortification of the outer senses, of the eyes, the tongue, the hearing, the touch, and the appetite; next, he will endeavour to detach the affections from wealth, honours, and the love of other agreeable objects; and after this he must apply himself to seriously resisting all the

passions and every imperfect movement of the soul. When the Director finds that he has sufficiently overcome these obstacles, he will engage his penitent to employ the same means of meditation, prayer, spiritual reading, the Sacraments, and so forth, for gaining more facility in the particular virtue which at the beginning was practised with difficulty and natural repugnance. Finally, when he shall have found that his disciple has acquired a sufficient readiness in the practice of all the moral virtues, the Confessor will direct him to adopt the same means for the purpose of attaining a like readiness in the exercise of the several acts of the love of God and the love of our neighbour which we have enumerated above. When the penitent shall have gained this stage, he will already have reached Christian Perfection, so far as is possible in this life. Although he will still find occupation in advancing further, and making daily progress in this perfection.

393. I will now renew an observation, which I have elsewhere made, when I laid down that the several operations developed in successive order in the course of this work are, in practice, simultaneous in the soul; so that a spiritual man, at one and the same time that he employs the means to clear away the hindrances to perfection, is acquiring a ready ease in the practice of virtue, and kindling within his heart more ardent flames of charity; while the more earnest he is in the use of these means, in the removal of obstacles, and in the ready practice of virtue, the more fervid will his charity become, and hence the higher will he rise in perfection.

SKELETONS OF SERMONS

DRAWN FROM

THE FOUR VOLUMES.

THESE "Skeletons of Sermons," as here given, are taken, with some variation, from the French version of the "*Direttorio Ascetico*," issued by the Abbé Pascal. They appeared originally in the Latin translation published by G. Tangl. Some believe them to have been written by Scaramelli himself. There is no sufficient warrant for this opinion, as they do not appear in the Italian editions. As, however, the references which they contain are made exclusively to Scaramelli's work, there can be no doubt of the usefulness of the "Skeletons," especially to the Clergy.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

OF THE SENSE OF TASTE AND OF THE VICE OF SENSUALITY.

"*Non in comessationibus et ebrietatibus.*"—AD ROM. xiij. 13.

Introduction.—The object of Holy Church in setting this Epistle before us to-day is to awaken us from our lethargy, to turn us away from doing the works of the devil, and to prepare us for the reception and the putting on of Jesus Christ. (*Induimini Jesum Christum.*) She bids us consider excess in eating and drinking as an obstacle to this.

Proposition.—The hateful vice of intemperance is the cause of many sins, and an obstacle to the coming of Jesus Christ. (1.) Intemperance is hateful to God (ij. nn. 72—74). (2.) It is the source of many sins (ij. nn. 68—71).

Conclusion.—We must use a candid watchfulness over the sense of taste, in which intemperance has its root, and address ourselves to the correction of shortcomings in this respect, before every other failing; for otherwise we cannot hope to put on Jesus Christ, or expect that He will take up His abode in our souls.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

OF THE USEFULNESS OF CONFESSION.

"*Qui præparabit viam ante te.*"—MATTH. xj. 10.

Introduction.—St. John prepared the ways of the Lord by preaching the Baptism of Penance. We must have recourse to the remedy of penance, in order to prepare our hearts by purity: for Jesus Christ has said that the Spirit of Wisdom will not enter into a soul defiled by sin.

Proposition.—Confession is an excellent means of purifying the heart: (1.) Because it wipes away sin committed (i. nn. 308—313); (2.) Because it keeps us from falling back into it (ibid. n. 313, to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Whoever, therefore, wishes to cleanse his heart, to get ready a dwelling worthy of God, to enjoy His presence in this world, and to see Him face to face for ever in the next, must employ this remedy, with the conditions prescribed.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

"*Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus.*"—AD PHIL. iv. 5.

Introduction.—As, in order to receive their Sovereign, courtiers put on an outward bearing full of modesty, so should we, follow-

ing the advice of the Apostle, clothe ourselves in it for the reception of Jesus Christ. Men are very much upon their guard not to commit an act of irreverence in the presence of their prince. Since, therefore, we are not only awaiting the arrival of our Divine Master, but are also desirous of enjoying His continued presence, we must give ourselves to the practice of the virtue of modesty.

Proposition.—Our modesty must be known to all the world, because it is the outward manifestation of the inner man, and gives fresh lustre to our moral character. (1.) It is a manifestation of the inner man (ij. nn. 136—139 inclusively). (2.) It adds lustre to our moral character (ibid. from n. 140 to end of Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must often examine and scrutinise our behaviour in this respect, to see that it does not run counter to the rules of modesty. This has especial reference to women and young persons. On no other terms will Jesus Christ come to us.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

OF SINCERITY IN OUR DEALING WITH OUR DIRECTOR.

"*Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei.*"—I. COR. iv. 1.

Introduction.—Whosoever wishes to walk in the commandments of God, so as to avoid the traps of the devil, to order his heart aright, and to worship God alone, must look upon his Confessor as the minister of Jesus Christ, &c., and must frankly open out his heart to him.

Proposition.—We must discover to our Confessor not only our sins, but also our good works; we must make known to Him: (1.) Our passions (i. nn. 114, 115); (2.) Our temptations (ibid. nn. 116–118); (3.) Our good works (ibid. nn. 119, 120).

Conclusion.—He, therefore, who would walk in the way of salvation with safety, must rid himself of all false shame, and discover himself, such as he is, to his Confessor. Without this

sincerity he will become the sport of devils, and end by falling into the abyss of perdition. The Divine Guest will not visit an insincere soul.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

OF POVERTY OF SPIRIT.

"*Et reclinavit eum in præsepio, eo quod non esset eis locus in diversorio.*"—Luc. ij. 7.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ has set us a striking example of poverty, not only by beginning His apostolical career in the most complete deprivation of every comfort and convenience, but also much more by practising and preaching this same virtue from His very cradle, that so we might learn to spurn the things of earth, and to fix our love upon heavenly goods.

Proposition.—Poverty of Spirit is a sovereign remedy against the lust of riches, and we must, therefore, take it to heart. (1.) Poverty of spirit is the antidote to the vice of avarice (ij. from n. 272—277). (2.) It is, therefore, a remedy to be used (ij. nn. 277—279).

Conclusion.—We must incite ourselves by frequent meditation to the practice of poverty of spirit, and by constant self-examination endeavour to know our hearts upon this point. Thus, and thus only, will Jesus Christ come to dwell in our souls.

FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

OF THE DESIRE TO GROW IN PIETY.

"*Qui continens est justitiæ, apprehendet illam.*"—Ecclus. xv. 1.

Introduction.—Many, no doubt, thirst after justice, that is to say, after solid piety. How is it, then, that so few attain to it? Because they do not persevere in their desires, or else because they easily allow these to cool. Let us beware lest this misfortune befall us.

Proposition.—Our thirst after justice must never slacken, but, on the contrary, it must grow daily more and more ardent. (1.) We must never abate in our desires (i. from n. 60—65.) (2.) We must, on the contrary, increase their ardour (ibid. nn. 65—68).

Conclusion.—We must often examine the desires of our hearts, and if we find them growing cold, we must enkindle them again, using for the purpose considerations such as those suggested in Vol. i., n. 89, in order that, with St. John, we may attain true justice in this life, and eternal glory in the next.

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD.

OF THE OBLIGATION OF ASPIRING TO VIRTUE.

"*Ut mundaret sibi populum acceptabilem sectatorem bonorum operum.*"—AD TITUM ij. 14.

Introduction.—If we wish to obtain the blessing of God upon the New Year, that it may be to us a year of happiness, we must be energetic in the performance of good works; and we must constantly keep in view the strict obligation we all are under in this respect. To obtain so happy a result, we lay down the two following principles:—

Proposition.—Everybody is bound to aim at perfection, but in different ways. (1.) Every Christian must tend to perfection (i. nn. 48, 52, 53, 54). (2.) The ways of perfection are diverse (ibid. nn. 49, 78, 79, 80).

Conclusion.—As no one is free to imagine that he can do without solid piety, so is every one bound to seek to attain to that particular kind of piety which is suitable to his character; and he must endeavour, from time to time, and never more than at the beginning of the New Year, to increase the ardour of such holy desires in his soul; for his happiness depends upon them.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE HARM WHICH OUR EVIL PASSIONS DO US.

"*Ut circumcideretur puer.*"—Luc. ij. 21.

Introduction.—The circumcision of the body, in use amongst the Jews, was a figure of the circumcision of the heart. Unhappy we, if, like to uncircumcised Jews, we become the slaves of our unruly passions. Then would the New Year prove a very unhappy one to us, and we should be exposing ourselves to the danger of everlasting reprobation.

Proposition.—Our bad and unmortified passions are the source of our chief evils. (1.) Our passions are fraught with evil in their effects (ij. nn. 227, 250, 251). (2.) We must mortify them (ibid. n. 128, to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must make it our constant business to mortify our passions, but especially our predominant passion (ij. nn. 252, 253); for if, in the course of the New Year, we shall have mortified our predominant passion, our time will have been well spent. Thomas à Kempis has said excellently well, that were we to take the pains of rooting out of our hearts but one vice each year, we should very soon attain to perfection.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE EPIPHANY.

OF PRUDENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF EXTERNAL PENANCE.

"*Offeratis corpora vestra hostiam viventem, sanctam, Deo placentem, rationabile obsequium vestrum.*"—Ad Rom. xij. 1.

Introduction.—After the example of the Magi, we must offer to God the myrrh of mortification, by making our souls and bodies living victims to the Lord. This offering must not, however, overstep the bounds of discretion, of which we propose to lay down the rules.

Proposition.—The works of penance must not be prejudicial either to our health or to the duties of our state of life. (1.) The

practice of penance must not be allowed to injure our health (ij. nn. 49—53). (2.) It must not prove an obstacle to the fulfilment of the duties of our state (ibid. n. 54 to the end of Chapter).

Conclusion.—Since discretion and prudence are so necessary in a matter of the kind, every one must make known his practices of penance to his Director, in order that, by submitting to his judgment, he may be guarded against the danger of going awry in the path of salvation.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF INORDINATE ATTACHMENT TO PARENTS.

"*Nesciebatis quia in his quæ Patris mei sunt, oportet me esse.*"—LUC. ij. 49.

Introduction.—Our Divine Redeemer, so full of goodness, holiness and tenderness, caused His parents unspeakable grief by the withdrawal of His sensible presence from them. He wished to teach us by His example to rid ourselves of inordinate attachment to kith and kin.

Proposition.—Exaggerated fondness for parents is soonest mended by separation from them, (1.) How far the love of our parents is hurtful (ij. from n. 330 to n. 345). (2.) Such inordinate attachments are corrected by separation from our parents (ibid. from n. 345 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must be on our guard lest flesh and blood get the better of us; and, if we can do so, must even withdraw to a distance from our parents, for this is the surest way to free ourselves from an affection which is an obstacle to sanctification.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

OF VIOLENT TEMPTATIONS IN PIOUS SOULS.

"*Inimicus homo hoc fecit.*"—MATTH. xiij. 28.

Introduction.—However carefully men may sow the precious seed in their souls, by hearkening attentively to the Word of God,

by constant meditation, by the frequentation of the Sacraments, by the practice of devout recollection, and what not; yet will the enemy of mankind strive to sow tares in the midst of the wheat by every kind of temptation. We must not, for all that, be discouraged.

Proposition.—Pious souls, when subjected to violent temptation, must not give way to fear. (1.) Such souls are liable to frequent temptation (ij. from n. 367 to n. 373). (2.) They ought not to lose heart (ibid. nn. 373, 374).

Conclusion.—When you give yourself up to the service of God, prepare yourself for temptation, and do not expect to find any rest in this life, but put your trust in God. In the heat of temptation beware of curtailing your exercises of piety (ij. n. 419).

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

OF THE THINGS TO ASK FOR IN PRAYER.

"*Memoriam vestri facientes in orationibus nostris, sine intermissione.*"—I. AD THESS. i. 1.

Introduction.—Prayer has such power with God, that by it we may obtain from Him all things, not only for ourselves, but also for all others. This it was which moved the Apostle to remember the inhabitants of Thessalonica in his prayers. And yet we make so little use of prayer, that we have recourse to it only as to a last resource.

Proposition.—(1.) How we are to pray for our own needs (i. 226—229). (2.) How we are to pray for the needs of others (ibid. 230—234).

Conclusion.—From what is said in the same volume, n. 234, we gather that we must pray unceasingly to God to grant us our petitions; in a word, we must obey the command of the Holy Ghost to pray always and never to cease.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

OF THE PRESERVATION OF CHASTITY BY MORTIFICATION.

"*Castigo corpus meum et in servitutem redigo.*"—I. Cor. ix. 27.

Introduction.—Although but lately ravished in ecstasy to the third heaven, the Apostle St. Paul kept under his body, in order to preserve his chastity against the sting of the flesh. What then ought our conduct to be with his example before us? Weak and frail as we are, our fall is certain if we do not guard our virtue by mortification. To overcome the natural antipathy which we feel for this virtue, let us consider its necessity.

Proposition.—Chastity is the fruit of mortification: (1.) Because our carnal appetites are easily kept in check by mortification (ij. nn. 19—22); (2.) Because the saints have found this to be the most efficacious preservative of chastity (ibid. n. 23 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—He who would be pure, must practise self-denial, especially at the outset of the spiritual life (ij. n. 28).

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE MORTIFICATION OF THE TONGUE.

"*Murmurabant adversus patremfamilias.*"—MATTH. xx. 11.

Introduction.—The workmen of the Gospel murmured against the master of the household, and they have many imitators at this day amongst ourselves; and this although we are perfectly aware that from this evil spring hatred, enmities, detraction, &c. The reason is, because we seldom reflect upon the freedom which we give our tongues, and the little restraint which we exercise over them.

Proposition.—It is difficult to keep a check upon the tongue, which is ever ready to utter evil. (1.) Proclivity of the tongue to sin (ij. nn. 213, 166, and the following). (2.) Difficulty of keeping the tongue in check (ij. n. 195 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—It is our duty to take especial pains in the mortification of the tongue (ij. nn. 214, 215).

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

OF THE LOVE OF RICHES.

"*Quod autem cecidit in spinas.*"—Luc. viij. 14.

Introduction.—We may perhaps be surprised to find that our Lord should stigmatise the riches of the world as thorns,—for thorns are prickly, while riches are full of charm. Men shun the thorns of life, and covet its comforts, I mean riches. But if we stop to consider the dangers of riches, we shall not take long to discover that they are real thorns.

Proposition.—An inordinate love of riches exposes our eternal salvation to great dangers: (1.) Because it is the cause of numberless sins (ij. from n. 266 to n. 270); (2.) Because God has cursed the love of riches (ibid. nn. 270, 271).

Conclusion.—If, therefore, we would not risk our salvation, we must lose no time in banishing the love of riches from our hearts. We should often probe our consciences in quest of the evil, and when found, drive it out at any cost.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

OF UNBRIDLED LOOKS.

"*Quid tibi vis ut faciam? Domine, ut videam.*"—Luc. xviij. 41.

Introduction.—As the blind man in the Gospel implored our Lord to give him back his sight, so should we, who have never lost our sight, entreat of Him the grace to make a good use of it. But, not content with asking for this favour, let us also keep a strict guard over our eyes, especially during the days of greater licence which immediately precede the holy season of Lent.

Proposition.—Too great freedom of the eyes is the cause of great

danger, and inevitable detriment to our souls. (1.) It is the cause of many a fall (ij. n. 118 to n. 124). (2.) It does incalculable mischief to the soul (ibid. from n. 124 to n. 125).

Conclusion.—(Vol. ij. n. 126.)

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.

OF FASTING.

"*Et cum jejunâsset quadraginta diebus, postea esuriit.*"—MATTH. iv. 2.

Introduction.—Fasting elevates the soul, and puts it in the way of acquiring virtue, and of earning the rewards of virtue: above all, it keeps our bad passions in check. As, therefore, our Holy Mother, the Church, is especially desirous that we should, at this holy season, correct our faults and acquire new virtues, let us imagine we hear the devout author of the 'Imitation' addressing directly to us the well-known advice,—'Mortify intemperance, and you will easily get the better of the concupiscence of the flesh.'

Proposition.—From the earliest ages of the Church the saints have always looked upon fasting as the unfailing cure of gluttony. (1.) Fasting is a sure remedy against this vice (ij. nn. 87, 88). (2.) This is proved by the example of the saints (ibid. from n. 89 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Penance, by fasting, is a ready means to triumph over vice and acquire virtue. Hear the words of Holy Church, sung in the preface at Mass: *Deus qui corporali jejunio vitia comprimis, mentem elevas, virtutem largiris et præmia.*

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING.

"*Dic, ut lapides isti panes fiant.*"—MATTH. iv. 3.

Introduction.—The vice of gluttony attacks us in various ways. At one time we are led to it by excess in the quantity, and at

another by too great delicacy in the quality of our food; now guilty of gluttony by greediness, even over coarser viands, or again, by eating merely for the sake of eating, and out of season, even as the demon tempted our divine Lord. We must, therefore, combat these temptations, after the example of Jesus Christ.

Proposition.—Although we are tempted in all kinds of ways to the vice of intemperance, yet is it possible to resist and overcome (ij. from n. 100 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us endeavour to overcome courageously the vice of gluttony, applying the remedies prescribed, in order to cure whatever is amiss in our conduct on this head.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT.

OF THE SCHOOL OF VIRTUE.

"*Duxit eos in montem excelsum seorsum.*"—MATTH. xvij. 1.

Introduction.—Solid virtue may be likened to a high mountain, whither we must retire, far from the noise of the world, to be instructed, as were the disciples of our Lord.

Proposition.—The school of virtue is like any other school: (1.) For it has its beginners (i. nn. 32, 33, 38, 41); (2.) Because there are in it those who make progress (ibid. nn. 32, 39—41.)

Conclusion.—Whosoever, then, wishes to attain to true piety must examine himself, and strive to advance more and more in that degree of virtue which he shall have found himself to possess, and if he discover that he has not as yet taken the first step, he must aspire to enter the school of virtue as a beginner.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT.

OF INTEGRITY AND SIMPLICITY IN CONFESSION.

"*Et illud erat mutum.*"—LUC. xj. 14.

Introduction.—Even now a days there are many sinners who, if not possessed bodily by the demon, are yet spiritually possessed

by a dumb devil. They find great difficulty in confessing their sins, and so the devil keeps them in slavery. This dumb devil must be driven out, more especially at Easter.

Proposition.—Integrity and simplicity are requisite in Confession. (1.) Our Confession must be entire (i. nn. 326—328, 342). (2.) It must be simple (ibid. nn. 329, 330).

Conclusion.—We must open out our heart to our Confessor, as to Jesus Christ Himself, and banish from our Confession the least shadow of a lie or of reserve, because we cannot cheat the Holy Ghost, and because the peace and comfort of our conscience depend upon integrity and simplicity in Confession.

THE SAME SUNDAY:

OF THE USEFULNESS OF MEDITATION.

"*Beati qui audiunt verbum Dei et custodiunt illud.*"—Luc. xj. 28.

Introduction.—They only are ranked by Jesus Christ among the just, who hear and keep His Word. If we would be of this number, we must keep His Divine Word in our hearts, meditate upon it, search into its hidden meaning, and reduce it to practice in our conduct.

Proposition.—Meditation on the Divine Word is conducive to salvation and perfection. (1.) Usefulness of meditation for salvation (i. from n. 152 to 158). (2). Necessity of meditation for the attainment of perfection (ibid. nn. 158—163).

Conclusion.—That the earth may not be made desolate with desolation, we must meditate and think in our hearts: nor are the ignorant exempt from this duty, who in matters of this world are sharp enough in their calculations, but they must be taught how to set about meditation.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT.

OF AMBITION.

"Jesus ergo cum cognovisset, quia venturi erant, ut raperent eum, et facerent eum regem, fugit iterum in montem, ipse solus."—JOAN. vj. 15.

Introduction.—In nothing is the whole life of Jesus Christ so opposed to the maxims of the world as in the low esteem in which He held honours and glory. The world goes in search of dignities and vain honours;—Jesus Christ abhors and shuns them. We are His disciples, and must walk in His footsteps: let us then reflect upon the nature and dangers of vainglory.

Proposition.—Ambition, which is not to be confounded with vainglory, is at open war with true piety. (1.) On the difference between ambition and vainglory (ij. n. 297, and the whole Chapter). (2.) On the deadly war between ambition and true piety (ibid. n. 303, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let not pride have any place in our hearts, for God resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble; and the humble alone can aspire to the kingdom of heaven.

PASSION SUNDAY.

OF VAINGLORY.

"Si ego glorifico meipsum, gloria mea nihil est."—JOAN. viij. 54.

Introduction.—Although Jesus was infinite Wisdom itself, although He was the Supreme Pontiff, Sovereign Judge, and Redeemer of men, and as such worthy of all honour, because of the Divinity hypostatically united to His human nature; although His very name of Jesus is so venerable that every knee must bend before it; yet did He never glory in His splendid prerogatives, that so He might instil into our hearts a deadly hatred of vainglory, and teach us to fear this vice. Let us therefore consider the heinousness of vainglory.

Proposition.—Vainglory is an enemy, as powerful as it is

irresistible, to those who aspire to perfection. (1.) It is a powerful enemy (ij. n. 310, and the whole Chapter). (2.) It is all but irresistible (ibid. n. 313, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must fight this enemy might and main, and scrutinise our every act of piety, to see that vainglory have no share in them; women especially must be on their guard upon this point. (See Vol. iv., nn. 334, 335.)

EASTER SUNDAY.

OF HUMILITY IN CONFESSION.

"*Expurgate vetus fermentum.*"—I. Cor. v. 7.

Introduction.—The Festival of Easter, in presenting to us the spectacle of our Redeemer raising Himself to life again after His descent into hell, gives us a sure hope of the forgiveness of our sins and of future glory, because He died and is risen for our sakes. Therefore, in spite of the humiliation which we feel in the avowal of sins, we have good reason to hope confidently for forgiveness.

Proposition.—Confession requires of us a humility full of hope. (1.) Confession requires humility (i. nn. 321, 322). (2.) This humility must be tempered by hope (ibid. nn. 323—325).

Conclusion.—Let us then humble ourselves beneath the almighty hand of God, without being troubled or cast down, and we shall not be confounded.

EASTER TUESDAY.

OF BACKBITING.

"*Dicit eis: Pax vobis.*"—Luc. xxiv. 36.

Introduction.—We read that after His resurrection, our Divine Redeemer used to greet His disciples with the salutation of, *Peace be with you*,—no doubt to teach them and us that there is

nothing He desires so much as that we should live in peace and charity one with another. How is it that nowadays peace seems to have fled from the earth? One of the principal causes of disturbance amongst us is the vice of backbiting, the source of dissensions, hatred, anger, and quarrelling. If we would possess the peace of Jesus Christ, we must attack the vice of backbiting.

Proposition.—We must abstain from backbiting, turn a deaf ear to it, and even, when the opportunity is afforded us, reprehend it in others. (1.) In what the malice of backbiting consists (ij. from n. 166 to n. 177). (2.) We must turn a deaf ear to it (ibid. from n. 177 to the end of the Chapter). (3.) We must reprehend it in others (ibid. nn. 188—190).

Conclusion.—Have a care not to listen to any backbiting, more particularly to such as is hidden under the cloak of piety (ij. 191—193).

LOW SUNDAY.

OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

"*Gavisi sunt discipuli viso Domino.*"—JOAN. XX. 20.

Introduction.—How we lag behind in the path of virtue! How cold is our prayer, and how weak and cowardly are we in the hour of trial and temptation! How was it that, as the Gospel informs us, the Disciples were filled with so great joy and courage in the performance of good works? The reason is because they had seen the Lord. If we keep God in sight, we too shall be animated with a holy courage.

Proposition.—The presence of God is the source of all virtue, and a weapon against temptation. (1.) It is a source of virtue (i. nn. 285, 286). (2). It is a weapon against temptation (ibid. n. 287).

Conclusion.—Tempted and disheartened souls must have recourse to the presence of God as an efficacious remedy and safe place of refuge.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

OF THE MEANS TO ACQUIRE DETACHMENT FROM CREATURES.

"*Expedit vobis ut ego vadam: si enim non abiero, Paraclitus non veniet ad vos.*"—JOAN. xvj. 7.

Introduction.—The love with which the Disciples loved their good Master, infinitely deserving as He is of the love of all His creatures, was certainly praiseworthy; but as their hearts were fascinated by the natural gifts and excellence of Jesus Christ, there was in their tenderness a human alloy, from which they had to purify their love, before the Holy Ghost could come down into their hearts; and so, separation from their Divine Master became a necessity. How carefully should we sound the depths of our hearts, and uproot from them the too human affections we foster for creatures!

Proposition.—We must find out what are the affections which master us, and endeavour, by efficacious means, to extirpate them. (1.) How to find out these affections (ij. nn. 360—362). (2.) The remedies to be employed (ibid. from n. 363 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Whosoever finds anything in what has been said applicable to himself in respect of these inordinate attachments, should adopt the means indicated to be rid of them—even though they appear painful and difficult—that so he may utterly destroy in his heart any such affection as is making war against his soul.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF VOCAL PRAYER.

"*In illa die, in nomine meo petetis.*"—JOAN. xvj. 26.

Introduction.—Many persons complain that, although they often pray, they are seldom heard. If it is so, the reason must be because they pray badly, and not in the name of Jesus Christ; or again, because their prayer is the prayer only of the lips and

not of the heart; for God Who listens to the inward groanings of the heart turns a deaf ear to every other kind of supplication. Let us, therefore, consider how we should pray, if we would be heard.

Proposition.—(1.) Our prayer must come from the heart (i. nn. 258, 259, 267, 269, 270). (2.) It must be attentive (ibid. n. 260 and the entire Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must pray with affection of the heart and attention of the mind, that God may never say of us,—*This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.*

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

OF THE MEANS TO CURB THE TONGUE.

"Si quis putat se religiosum esse, non refrænans linguam suam, sed seducens cor suum, hujus vana est religio."—JAC. i. 26.

Introduction.—Men understand religion and piety in different ways; some making them consist in prayer, some in mortification and others again in the works of mercy. But each of these will be practised in vain, unless every other obligation be fulfilled at the same time; and amongst these St. James reckons the restraint of the tongue if we would not have our religion to be an empty word. We will now explain here in what true piety consists in this respect.

Proposition.—To acquire a perfect mastery of our tongue, we must pray, watch, and constantly renew our good resolutions. (1.) We must pray and often renew our good resolutions (ij. nn. 201—204). (2.) We must be continually watchful (ibid. nn. 205—207).

Conclusion.—It is a matter of great difficulty to govern the tongue, and we should be anxious to secure the help necessary for us. This has special reference to young women, &c.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

"*Quidquid orantes petitis, credite, quia accipietis.*"—MARC. xj. 24.

Introduction.—It is truly surprising, that, whereas God has over and over again made us the most solemn promise of every help needful to soul and body, we yet remain steeped in misery and poverty, more particularly in what regards the interests of our souls. It cannot be that God is unfaithful: the fault is therefore in ourselves, because we have not recourse to prayer, as the sovereign remedy of all our evils. If we are desirous to profit by the merciful promises of God, we must be first convinced that everything is to be obtained by prayer (i. from n. 236 to n. 242).

Conclusion.—(Vol. i. nn. 242, 243.)

ROGATION MONDAY.

OF THE CONDITIONS OF PRAYER.

"*Si perseveraverit pulsans.*"—LUC. xj. 8.

Introduction.—We ask, but we do not receive, because we are at no pains to correct the faults which render our prayers unavailing. Our prayer is full of misgivings and doubts; and he whose heart wavers need not expect to be heard; he is wanting in humility, and God resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble. Lastly, our prayer lacks constancy, and they alone receive who persevere. Let us endeavour to banish these deficiencies from our prayers.

Proposition.—(1.) We must pray with confidence and humility (i. from n. 244 to n. 251). (2.) We must pray with perseverance (ibid. from n. 251 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—In all our prayers let these essential conditions be fulfilled, for otherwise if we are not heard, we have only ourselves to blame, because we have prayed amiss.

THE SAME DAY.

OF THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER.

"*Pulsate et aperietur vobis.*"—LUC. xj. 9.

Introduction.—There is no duty which our Lord Jesus Christ has so often and so emphatically inculcated, both by example and by word of mouth, upon His disciples, as the duty of prayer. And yet most Christians make so light of prayer, that they either pray with tepidity and endless distractions, without any relish, or else they neglect prayer altogether. The obvious conclusion is, that they think little of the necessity of prayer.

Proposition.—Prayer is necessary, not only to attain to perfection, but even to obtain the grace of salvation. The necessity of prayer is proved: (1.) By reason: (2.) By authority; (3.) By experience (i. from n. 213 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We should be full of zeal for prayer, nor ever allow ourselves to be turned aside from it, either by the feeling of disgust, by the suggestions of the evil spirit, or by the idle excuse of a press of business.

WHIT-SUNDAY.

OF SCRUPLES, AND OF THE MARKS WHEREBY THEY ARE KNOWN.

"*Non turbetur cor vestrum, neque formidet.*"—JOAN. xiv. 1.

Introduction.—The Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, is a Spirit of Peace; this is why, when Jesus Christ promised Him to the Apostles, He added, *My peace I leave you.* Those are, therefore, much deceived who fancy that there can be no true piety without perpetual uneasiness of mind, and who are not able to resist the troubles of scruples. And some go further, and make matters worse, by persuading themselves that it is not scruples, but real remorse of conscience, which gnaws their souls. For the enlightenment of such persons we will set down the following—

Proposition.—We must distinguish between scruples and the prickings of conscience. (1.) What is meant by scruples, and their causes (ij. from n. 421 to n. 430). (2.) The marks of scruples (ibid. from n. 430 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Whoever finds that he has a narrow and scrupulous conscience would do well to examine himself by the light of the rules which we have pointed out, and if he recognises that he is subject to scruples, he must apply the prescribed remedies. If, however, he discovers that he is really a prey to true remorse of conscience, let him go straightway and get rid of his burden in the sacred tribunal of Penance.

WHIT-MONDAY.

OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

"*Omnis enim qui male agit, odit lucem, et non venit ad lucem, ut non arguantur opera ejus.*"—JOAN. iij. 20.

Introduction.—Numberless and great sins are daily committed in the world, sins of impurity, sins of injustice, sins of intemperance, &c.; and all because men love the darkness and hate the light, because they will not walk in the presence of God. They do not even think of Jesus Christ, the true Light. If we would not fall into these disorders, we must walk in the presence of God.

Proposition.—The presence of God is the most effectual preventive of voluntary sin (i. from n. 276 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—To be free from sin and temptation to sin, we must walk in the presence of God, and endeavour to make the practice familiar to us by an earnest endeavour to employ the means which this exercise furnishes us, and which we have just pointed out.

THE SAME DAY.

OF THE PASSIONS OF THE SOUL.

"*Rege quod est devium.*"—SEQUENCE OF WHIT-SUNDAY.

Introduction.—In the Mass appointed to be read on Whit-Sunday and during the Octave, the Church prays God to give us the gift of peace, which is reckoned among the first-fruits of the Holy Ghost. This peace is rather interior than exterior, and consists in the laying of the passions of the soul. Let us also often pray to the Holy Ghost, saying, *Rege quod est devium.* Besides, it is our duty to co-operate with the Holy Ghost by mortifying our passions. Let us see how this is to be done.

Proposition.—We must not try to eradicate, but only to bring into subjection and to regulate, the several passions of the soul. (1.) The passions are not to be eradicated (ij. nn. 220—223). (2.) They are to be well regulated (ibid. nn. 224—226).

Conclusion.—We must keep a constant watch over the passions, our internal foes, which cannot be entirely destroyed, but which both can and must be constantly checked and mortified. Let us often invoke the help of the Holy Ghost.

WHIT-TUESDAY.

OF THE CHOICE OF A DIRECTOR.

"*Qui non intrat per ostium in ovile ovium, sed ascendit aliunde, ille fur est et latro.*"—JOAN. X. 1.

Introduction.—The truth expressed in these words is alarming, not only to Priests and those who have the care of souls, but also to the faithful generally, for the murders and robberies here spoken of turn to the hurt and damage of the faithful. We must be very careful in our choice of a Director, and not intrust the care of our soul to the first-comer or to the easiest and most indulgent Director.

Proposition.—There are three qualifications to be taken into

account in the choice of a Director—knowledge, piety, and experience (i. from n. 107 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—No one should confide the care of his soul to the first-comer, since, in the choice of a physician for our bodies, we are careful to select the cleverest. If it is not in our power to make the best possible choice, we must put our trust in God, Who, in such a case, will give His grace to our Director, so that his direction may turn to the advantage of our souls.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

"*Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem sæculi.*"—MATTH. xxviij. 20.

Introduction.—The thought that Jesus Christ is always with us ought to fill our souls with comfort; and if our love of God is sincere, how happy ought we to be to think that the Three Divine Persons lower themselves to us, and dwell in the midst of us! Would it not be very profitable to learn from our conversation with the Blessed Trinity to walk always in the presence of God?

Proposition.—The presence of God is the royal road to perfection (i. n. 272 and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—He who desires to attain to solid piety, must walk in the presence of God. Without this practice it is impossible, with it it is easy, to arrive at perfection.

THE SAME DAY.

THE ENDS FOR WHICH GOD PERMITS TEMPTATION.

"*Quam incomprehensibilia sunt judicia ejus, et investigabiles viæ ejus.*"—AD ROM. xj. 33.

Introduction.—The Blessed Trinity is a great mystery, the judgments of God are a bottomless abyss, and the ways by which

He draws us to Himself are inscrutable. Often what seems an obstacle is really a help; and this is especially true of the dryness, darkness, and temptation by which the soul is frequently strengthened and perfected in prayer. Let us learn to abandon ourselves to the guidance of God under these circumstances.

Proposition.—Temptations are often permitted by God that our virtue may be put to the test and strengthened. (1.) They are permitted to try us (ij. nn. 375—377). (2.) To strengthen our virtue (ibid. from n. 378 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must, therefore, never lose heart in our conbats with the devil, but put our trust in God, secure in the hope that these temptations will be useful, and serve to advance us on our way towards perfection.

FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

OF THE USEFULNESS OF HOLY COMMUNION.

"*Qui manducat meam carnem, et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ego in illo.*"—JOAN. vj. 57.

Introduction.—Great is God's mercy to us, for there is no people which can boast that their gods come as near home to them as our God comes to us. Our God is not only near us in the mysterious Sacrifice of the Altar, but He comes into our hearts by Holy Communion. More than this, He unites His life to ours, so that it is no longer we who live, but God lives in us.

Proposition.—By Holy Communion we are closely united to God, and admitted to a participation of the Divinity. (1.) In what this intimate union consists (i. nn. 390—395). (2.) In what this participation of the Divinity consists (ibid. from n. 396 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must entertain a very high esteem for this Divine Sacrament, nourish in our souls an ardent longing for the Heavenly Food, and dispose ourselves with every possible care to receive it worthily.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION.

"*Caro mea vere est cibus, et sanguis meus vere est potus.*"—JOAN. vj. 56.

Introduction.—The love of parents for their children is certainly very great, when by the sweat of their brow they provide them with the necessaries of life, preserve them from harm, and watch over them with solicitude, until such time as they can take care of themselves. But the love of Jesus Christ for us is infinitely greater, since, in giving us the Eucharistic Bread, which is sent down from Heaven, He feeds us with His own flesh and blood.

Proposition.—The Bread of the Eucharist feeds and preserves the life of the soul, increases and develops it. (1.) It feeds and preserves the life of the soul (i. from n. 397 to n. 405). (2.) It develops and increases the life of the soul (ibid. from n. 405 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us entertain a great hunger for this food; and as, to preserve the life of the body, we are obliged often to take food; so, to preserve the life of the soul, we must have frequent recourse to the Bread of the Eucharist.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF IMMEDIATE PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

"*Homo quidam fecit cœnam magnam.*"—LUC. xiv. 16.

Introduction.—The Holy Eucharist is indeed a splendid banquet, as well by reason of the costly Meat and Drink herein provided, as of the delicious fruits derived from it, and of the great number of guests invited to sit down to it. But a careful preparation is needed to partake worthily of it; for to present ourselves without the wedding-garment is to expose ourselves to the danger of being cast out into exterior darkness; and if, not being so bad as this, we yet approach the Holy Table without the dispositions required of us, we put an obstacle in the way of our

tasting the precious fruits which we should otherwise derive from Holy Communion.

Proposition.—We must approach this august banquet: (1.) With a firm faith (i. nn. 410—413); (2.) With profound humility (ibid. nn. 414—416); (3.) With burning charity (ibid. nn. 417, 418).

Conclusion.—We must adorn our souls with these virtues, if we would derive great fruit from our Communions. Hence we should familiarise ourselves with the motives which should move us to acquire the virtues of Faith, Humility, and Charity.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF FREQUENT COMMUNION.

"*Compelle intrare, ut impleatur domus mea.*"—LUC. xiv. 23.

Introduction.—Since the father of the family, who issues his invitation on this day to the feast, wishes people to be pressed to enter his hall, some may ask whether we must enter in every day, to partake of the Eucharist, of which this feast is a type.

Proposition.—The practice of daily Communion is in itself lawful and praiseworthy, but it is not to be allowed to all indiscriminately. (1.) Daily Communion is lawful and praiseworthy (i. n. 419, and the whole Chapter). (2.) It is not to be allowed to all (ibid. n. 428, and the whole of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must entertain a great esteem for the practice of daily Communion; but in order to be admitted to it, we must keep our souls in a great purity, and prepare ourselves worthily by various pious exercises.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HOW TO COMBAT TEMPTATION.

"*Cui resistite fortes in fide.*"—I. PET. v. 9.

Introduction.—The enemy of our souls goes about like a lion seeking his prey. He tempts us according to the various passions

by which each is possessed, such as lust, anger, avarice, and pride. He assails us continually—there is no truce and no peace. Nevertheless, we must not lose heart; on the contrary, we must be firm in our faith, and hold out against the foe with all our might.

Proposition.—(1.) Our resistance must be vigorous (ij. from n. 390 to n. 394). (2.) We must get the power to resist from prayer (ibid. from n. 394 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us resist and never tire; having recourse to God, Who is our strength and the only source of our courage, and the enemy shall never prevail against us; for faith in prayer will fill us with courage and intrepidity.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE DANGERS OF VAINGLORY.

"Vanitati enim creatura subjecta est non volens."—AD ROM. viij. 20.

Introduction.—Our lot and condition are much to be pitied, for we feel in our members a law, which is contrary to the law of the spirit, and we are, in spite of ourselves, subject to Vainglory. And yet men are not much put out by the havoc which this vice makes in the midst of us. That it may not prove hurtful to us, we will consider the damage it causes to souls.

Proposition.—Vainglory combats virtue by seven vices. (1.) What these vices are severally (ij. n. 310). (2.) The damage they do to true piety (ibid. nn. 311, 312).

Conclusion.—Let us carefully avoid this plague, so fatal to true piety. It taints with its poison the most meritorious works, and makes them hateful in the sight of God. Let us often examine our words and our deeds with all possible care, in order that we may not be exposed to the danger of perishing by this deadly plague.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF FREQUENT COMMUNION.

"*Cum turbæ irruerent in Jesum.*"—LUC. v. 1.

Introduction.—The countless crowds, of which the Gospel of to-day speaks, must have been animated by a strong faith, for they flocked together from all sides, and gathered round the person of Jesus Christ, to catch the words which fell from His sacred Lips. What would their eagerness have been, if it had been given to them as it has been given to us to feed upon His sacred Body? We ought to be stimulated to a more frequent reception of the holy Eucharist by the spectacle of the faith of these good people. We will consider to-day the steps which we should take in reference to the practice of Frequent Communion.

Proposition.—Weekly Communion ought to be very common, although in some cases a more frequent, and in others a less frequent, reception of the Eucharist is to be allowed. (1.) Under what circumstances is Weekly Communion to be allowed? (i. nn. 133, 434, 440.) (2.) When is a more frequent or less frequent Communion to be enjoined? (ibid. nn. 435—437).

Conclusion.—Let us live in such a way as to be able to communicate at least once a week, and let no one take upon himself to find fault with those who receive every eight days. Moreover, he who receives less frequently, ought to be full of regret that his tepidity debars him from a more frequent reception of the Bread of Angels.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

"*Misereor super turbam, quia ecce jam triduo sustinent me, nec habent quod manducent.*"—MARC. viij. 2.

Introduction.—Many persons are much afflicted, if for one cause or another they are unable to procure themselves the happiness of Holy Communion; or again, if for good reasons they are not

allowed to communicate often. But Jesus Christ has compassion on this class of persons, and offers them comfort in the heavenly food of the Spiritual Communion. That we may learn to make a good use of this divine food, we will explain how the practice of Spiritual Communion may be made profitable to the soul.

Proposition.—Spiritual Communion, when properly made, is of very great use. (1.) The usefulness of Spiritual Communion (i. nn. 441, 442). (2.) How to make it (ibid. nn. 443, 444).

Conclusion.—If, then, we are unable to communicate Sacramentally as often as we should like, we can at least have recourse to Spiritual Communion, since this may be made in all places and at all times with very great fruit to our souls.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE HARM WHICH THE SENSE OF TOUCH DOES THE SOUL.

"*Exhibuistis membra vestra servire immunditiæ.*"—AD ROM. vj. 19.

Introduction.—The havoc done among souls by the vice of lust is incalculable, and this notwithstanding that its shameful and deplorable ravages are being daily brought before the eyes of men. Whence all this, if not from the too great freedom which men allow themselves in the Sense of Touch, the deadly enemy of Chastity? We will lay bare the artifices of this treacherous foe, that we may not be caught by them.

Proposition.—Freedom in matters relating to the sense of touch is the ruin of the soul: (1) Because it is an incentive to shameful acts (ij. nn. 5—8); (2.) Because it blinds the understanding (ibid. nn. 9—11).

Conclusion.—We must keep a strict watch over the sense of touch, and not allow it any, the least, freedom. We must also adopt the means, which are the most effectual in checking this sense; and here the preacher must be sparing of his words, and be prudent in the little he says.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE EFFECTS OF GLUTTONY.

"*Debitores sumus non carni, ut secundum carnem vivamus.*"—AD ROM. viij. 12.

Introduction.—They are necessarily to be reckoned amongst those who live according to the flesh, who, being slaves to the vice of gluttony, make gods of their bellies. They do not eat and drink according to the dictates of reason, to support life and repair their strength, but to gratify their animal appetites and to procure themselves a certain gross delight and pleasure. Now the Apostle threatens those who live according to the flesh with death; let us, therefore, conceive a great horror of this vice.

Proposition.—The detestable effects of gluttony ought to make us shun anything which savours of it. (1.) We will consider the evil effects of gluttony (ij. from n. 75 to n. 83). (2.) We will conceive a great horror of it (ibid. from n. 83 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Whoever esteems self-denial and piety, will take up arms against the vice of gluttony, and hold in abhorrence every excess in this respect.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE DAILY EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

"*Redde rationem villicationis tuæ.*"—LUC. xvj. 2.

Introduction.—As the servant here spoken of in the Gospel was denounced as unfaithful to his master, so have we every reason to suspect our fidelity to our heavenly Master, because of the rebellion of our passions and our bias to evil. This is why we should often take ourselves to task, and examine our conscience carefully every day.

Proposition.—Authority and reason prove the usefulness of the Examination of Conscience. (1.) Proved by authority (i. n. 355 and the following). (2.) By reason (ibid. n. 360 and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—He who wishes to keep his heart pure, must cleanse it from its stains by frequent self-examination. He who is striving after perfection must make good by daily self-examination the losses he has suffered.

THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE USEFULNESS OF PIOUS READING.

"*Scripta sunt ad correptionem nostram.*"—1 AD COR. x. 11.

Introduction.—The Divine Goodness uses many different ways to teach us the doctrine of salvation. Such are instructions in every shape, catechisms, sermons, pious conversation, meditation upon the eternal truths, but above all, Spiritual Reading: often more profitable than all the rest. Hence the Apostle recommends to us such holy books as are calculated to correct and improve us.

Proposition.—Spiritual Reading is useful not only as placing us on the road to virtue, but also as making us advance and as conducting us to the highest degrees of sanctity. (1.) Spiritual Reading is useful as putting us on the road to virtue (i. nn. 138, 139). (2.) As causing us to advance in virtue (ibid. n. 141) (3.) As leading to a high degree of virtue (ibid. nn. 142, 143).

Conclusion.—Let us give as much of our spare time as we can to this holy exercise, and we shall derive great profit from the perusal of good books, especially from such as are best suited to our condition in life.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE SORROW FOR SIN REQUIRED IN CONFESSION.

"*Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori.*"—LUC. xvii. 13.

Introduction.—Many nowadays confess their sins with the penitent Publican, smite their breasts, and say, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, and yet would seem as though they went not away

like this man, justified, having recovered the grace of God and burst asunder the chains of sin,—for the wonderful effects of sanctifying grace are not visible in them. Why is this the case? Perhaps because they pay too much attention to an exact enumeration of their sins, and take too little trouble to elicit a hearty sorrow for sin. If we would be justified with the Publican, our sorrow must be as sincere as was his.

Proposition.—That which really cleanses the soul from its stains is an inward and efficacious sorrow, and not a prolix Confession. (1.) Many words do not purify the soul (i. nn. 315—318). (2.) Real sorrow does purify the soul (ibid. nn. 319, 320, 340).

Conclusion.—Contrition, then, is what the penitent should be chiefly solicitous to elicit, and we should familiarise ourselves with the motives which excite true sorrow in the heart. The preacher might here briefly enumerate them.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE SENSE OF HEARING.

"*Et statim apertæ sunt aures ejus.*"—MARC. vij. 35.

Introduction.—The Sense of Hearing is like a door wide open, through which the enemy of our salvation enters into our souls and makes them his own, as is proved by so much obscene talk, so many murmurs, calumnies, &c. On the other hand, it is also by the sense of hearing that faith, and with faith every other virtue, penetrates into the soul. This, then, is the door of our souls over which we must keep close guard, opening it to pious conversation, but shutting it against all evil talk.

Proposition.—We must carefully guard our ears; for, if they are the channels of good, they are also the conduits of evil. (1.) We will consider the evils of the sense of hearing (ij. nn. 158—161). (2.) Its advantages (ibid. nn. 163—165).

Conclusion.—We must turn a deaf ear to evil conversation (n. 162), and listen to pious discourses (n. 194).

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF SILENCE.

"*Quanto autem eis præcipiebat, tanto magis plus prædicabant.*"—MARC. vij. 36.

Introduction.—We are only too often guilty of the fault committed by the people of whom the Gospel speaks to-day; for the more we are enjoined to silence, the more we speak. And yet, it is not so difficult to be silent in order that we may not make mistakes by speaking. That we may learn with the dumb man of the Gospel to speak aright, let us learn to hold our tongues.

Proposition.—To avoid the sins of the tongue, a certain degree of silence is necessary to all, especially to young people. (1.) The law of silence concerns all men (ij. nn. 208, 209, 212, 216). (2.) It is particularly necessary for the young of both sexes (ibid. nn. 210, 211).

Conclusion.—Let each one examine himself, and see how he ought to keep his tongue in check so as never to fall into any excess, and also what manner of silence he must observe.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

IN WHAT CONSISTS THE ESSENCE OF PERFECTION.

"*Diliges Dominum Deum tuum.*"—LUC. x. 27.

Introduction.—Many Christians fancy that holiness or perfection is out of their reach, because they make it to consist in extraordinary works, or because they conceive it to be peculiar to those who have given themselves to God in Religion. This is a mistake.

Proposition.—The essence of perfection consists in the love of God and our neighbour: (1.) Primarily, in the love of God (i. from n. 12 to n. 16); (2) Secondarily, in the love of our neighbour (ibid. from n. 16 to n. 18).

Conclusion.—We must all take heart, since we are all able to love God and our neighbour; for he who will consider the motives

which urge us to this twofold love, will in such meditations find nothing but comfort and facility. (The preacher may enumerate the said motives.)

THE SAME SUNDAY.

HOW TO READ WITH PROFIT.

"*Quomodo legis?*"—Luc. x. 26.

Introduction.—Both authority and reason prove Spiritual Reading to be a wonderful usefulness, and yet so many get no good from it. The reason is, that many do not read as they ought. That pious reading may be serviceable to us, we will consider how we ought to read.

Proposition.—That pious reading may be profitable, there are certain conditions to be fulfilled before and after this exercise. (1.) What is to be done before reading (i. nn. 141, 144—146). (2.) What is to be done after reading (ibid. n. 150).

Conclusion.—All must try to fulfil the conditions just indicated, otherwise little profit is to be expected from spiritual reading.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE WORKS OF PENANCE.

"*Qui autem Christi sunt carnem suam crucifixerunt cum concupiscentiis suis.*"—Ad Gal. v. 24.

Introduction.—So obstinate and so deadly is the war of the flesh against the spirit, which is being unceasingly waged within us, that in the conflict between powers so opposed to each other we are sometimes driven to do what we would fain not do. How may this evil be remedied? The Apostle suggests the crucifying of the flesh with its concupiscences. We will therefore, to-day, set forth the different works of penance, as practised by the saints.

Proposition.—The saints have left us examples of various kinds

of Penance (ij. n. 29, and the whole Chapter, as also n. 41, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—As, by reason of our numberless backslidings, we are under a stricter obligation than were the saints to do works of penance, that we may atone for our sins and deaden our rebellious passions, let us select for our practice such exercises of penance as are suited to our state and condition; for he who hates his soul in this life, shall save and preserve it for happiness in the next.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HOW TO COMBAT VAINGLORY.

"*Non efficiamur inanis gloriæ cupidi.*"—AD GAL. v. 26.

Introduction.—The vice of Vainglory is the ruin of a great number of good works, and it is a formidable—not to say an indomitable—enemy of virtue. Hence it is not without reason that the Apostle exhorts us not to be eager for vainglory. We must therefore close our hearts against the entrance of so terrible an enemy, and use every means at our disposal to keep him at a distance.

Proposition.—To escape the contamination of this vice we must offer our good works to God with great purity of intention, and hide them from the sight of men. (1.) We must offer up our good works to God alone (ij. nn. 326, 327). (2.) We must conceal them from the gaze of men (ij. n. 328 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—It is to God alone that we must tend in the performance of meritorious works, which we must not publish to the world. We must not, however, be wanting in discretion in the means which we employ to obtain this end (vide ij. nn. 337—339).

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF CONSTANCY IN FERVENT DESIRES.

"*Bonum autem facientes non deficiamus.*"—AD GAL. vi. 9.

Introduction.—The inconstancy of our weak nature is very lamentable: to-day we are full of fervour, and on the morrow our charity has grown cool. The most trifling cause is enough to turn us aside from the path of virtue. We must therefore spare no pains to keep alive the fervour of our desires, and we will suggest the means of attaining so desirable an end.

Proposition.—To maintain our pious desires in their first fervour, we must often renew our good resolutions in our meditations and carefully examine the past and present state of our souls. (1.) The renewal of good resolutions (i. nn. 69, 70). (2.) Examination of the past and present of the soul (i. nn. 71—74).

Conclusion.—We cannot keep up the fervour of our desires if we do not take the necessary steps to do so. Every one must therefore make it his business to impress on his memory what has been said, and to strive to put it in practice in order that he may never grow weary, nor come to a stand-still on the road to heaven.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE EXCELLENCE OF CHARITY.

"*Quod est mandatum magnum in lege?*"—MATTH. xxij. 36.

Introduction.—How beautiful is the virtue of Charity! It is called in the Gospel of to-day a *great commandment;* and elsewhere Jesus Christ has told us that He loves them who love Him; thereby signifying the excellence of charity above all other virtues, inasmuch as it is by charity we possess sanctifying grace. To-day, then, let us consider charity as the Queen of Virtues, that our hearts may be enkindled by the sight of her beauty.

Proposition.—Charity is the queen of virtues: (1.) Because

all the moral virtues are dependent upon charity (i. n. 19 and the following). (2.) Because charity has the power to foster piety (i. n. 27).

Conclusion.—We must work steadily and energetically in the practice of the moral virtues, and we must do the works which help to foster piety, for we cannot have charity unattended by her sister virtues. But more than this,—charity must be the end and object of the practice of the virtues and of our good works, that these may help us to attain the more easily to true charity.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE VIRTUE OF PRUDENCE.

"*In omnibus divites facti estis in illo, in omni verbo et in omni scientia.*"—1 AD COR. i. 5.

Introduction.—The Apostle had good reason to thank God that He had filled the Corinthians with all knowledge and with His divine light. How many faults of imprudence should we escape, and how many virtues should we practice, if we set as high a value on the gifts of knowledge and prudence—gifts which we should often ask God to bestow upon us. Let us excite in ourselves the desire of these virtues by the following considerations:—

Proposition.—The virtue of Prudence is of the utmost importance: (1.) Because no other virtue can exist without it (ij. nn. 24, 25); (2.) Because it preserves all the other virtues (ij. nn. 26, 27, and the following).

Conclusion.—If we desire to make progress in the other virtues, we must endeavour to acquire the virtue of prudence, for, as the Holy Ghost tells us, "Happy is the man who has found wisdom, and who is filled with prudence," &c. (ij. n. 28 to the end).

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF GENERAL CONFESSION.

"*Confide, fili, remittuntur tibi peccata tua.*"—MATTH. ix. 2.

Introduction.—In addition to the other excellent fruits which it bears, every well-made Confession leaves us the consoling assurance that our sins have been forgiven, and fills the soul with a filial confidence and a delicious calm. But it is more especially the property of a General Confession to produce these happy results; so that he who would enjoy this filial confidence and sweet tranquillity to the full would do well to have recourse to a General Confession, which is the subject we propose to treat to-day.

Proposition.—A General Confession is necessary for some, hurtful to others, and useful to a third class of persons. (1.) It is necessary for some (i. n. 331). (2.) Hurtful to others (i. nn. 331, 332). (3.) Lastly, useful to a third class of persons (i. n. 333 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Every one must think highly of the practice of General Confession, with the exception of such persons as are scrupulous and excessively timid; and he who proposes seriously to amend his life would do well to make a General Confession.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF TEPIDITY.

"*Renovamini spiritu mentis vestræ.*"—AD EPHES. iv. 23.

Introduction.—St. Francis of Sales compares the heart of man to a clock, which will not mark the hour, unless it be wound up, cleaned, and oiled at regular intervals. In like manner the heart of man, like the wheels of the clock, has a constant downward tendency. It must therefore be continually lifted up and directed to God, cleansed from its stains, and filled with the unction of the Holy Ghost; in a word, it must be renewed, according to the instruction of the Apostle: and this shall be the subject of our meditation to-day.

Proposition.—We must make serious efforts to shake off tepidity from our souls. (1.) The nature of tepidity, the damage it does the soul, and in what it differs from spiritual aridity (i. nn. 81—85). (2.) How to rid ourselves of tepidity (i. nn. 86—89).

Conclusion.—Since tepidity is so prejudicial to the soul, and since God rejects all who are neither hot nor cold, we must spare no pains to get rid of this vice, and make use of the means which we have indicated, to stop its further progress the moment we are conscious of its presence in our souls.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE LOVE OF RICHES.

"*Et abierunt alius in villam suam, alius ad negotiationem suam.*"—MATTH. xxij. 5.

Introduction.—The Marriage Feast, which the King spoken of in the Gospel celebrated in honour of his son, is a type of the nuptials of the Lamb, to which we are invited by our Heavenly Father, and alas! how few there are who avail themselves of the welcome, for not only are great sinners, the lecherous, the miserly and the proud, excluded from this banquet, but also such pious persons as expose themselves to the risk of being shut out from it, by reason of excessive anxiety about their temporal interests, and their inordinate solicitude about the things of this life.

Proposition.—The love of riches, so hurtful to perfection, is often found lurking in the souls even of pious persons. (1.) The love of riches hurtful to perfection (ij. n. 257 and the entire Chapter). (2.) It often lurks in the souls of pious people (ij. nn. 286—288).

Conclusion.—No one can trust himself in this matter; we must often examine ourselves, and as soon as we discover any traces of this pernicious vice in our hearts, apply the remedies indicated in the Second Point.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HOW TO COMBAT TEMPTATION.

"*Induite vos armaturam Dei, ut possitis stare adversus insidias diaboli.*" AD EPHES. vj. 11.

Introduction.—Our enemy the devil is most certainly a very powerful adversary, and we have to fight not against flesh and blood, but the powers of darkness. The enemy does not attack us all with the same violence, or in the same way; he is ever varying his tactics and changing the method of his assaults. We must therefore take up against him the various weapons which God has placed at our disposal. Let us consider how we should combat the different temptations to which we are exposed.

Proposition.—There are many ways of resisting temptation. (1.) Some temptations must be met with contempt, others by contrary acts (ij. from n. 409 to n. 413). (2.) Some are to be challenged and faced, and others are overcome by flight (ij. n. 413).

Conclusion.—Every one must examine into the character of his temptations, and select the readiest and most suitable method of meeting and overcoming them. This is a matter in which there is no room for self-reliance; we must not follow our own whims but abide by the advice of our Director.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

HOW TO MAKE THE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

"*Voluit rationem ponere cum servis suis.*"—MATTH. xviij. 23.

Introduction.—If, like the King spoken of in to-day's Gospel, from time to time we come to a reckoning with our subjects, that is to say, with the faculties of our soul and the affections of our heart, we shall discover in our turn that we are debtors to the amount of thousands of talents. But as we seldom or ever enter seriously into this reckoning with ourselves, we continue on in

perfect ignorance of our liabilities. Hence, that we may be the better able one day to square our accounts with the great King of Heaven, let us learn how to make the Examination of Conscience with profit.

Proposition.—The following *memoria technica* will help us to remember the five heads or points of this Examination :—

"Redde Deo grates, pete lumen, discute mentem,
Sit dolor intensus, propositumque tibi."

(i. n. 369 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—To derive fruit from our examinations of conscience, the above-named five conditions must be scrupulously fulfilled, for we cannot neglect without detriment the employment of means, of which the usefulness is established by the example and practice of so many pious persons.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF TEMPTATION HIDDEN UNDER THE APPEARANCE OF GOOD.

"*Ut probetis potiora.*"—AD PHILIPP. i. 10.

Introduction.—In this Epistle St. Paul begs of God to bestow upon the Philippians certain graces, such as charity, a plentiful knowledge, sincerity, freedom from sin, and the power to discern and choose the better part. And with reason, for we are often exposed to the most insidious assaults of the devil, who, the better to conceal his perfidy, sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light, and then we have need of much watchfulness and light to discern good from evil.

Proposition.—All men are exposed to temptation ; but the more subtle kinds of temptations fall to the share of pious persons. (1.) All men, without distinction of persons, are assailed by temptation (ij. 407, 408). (2.) But the virtue of pious persons is put to the test by the more subtle forms of temptation (ij. from n. 414 to n. 419).

Conclusion.—Let us not be hoodwinked by the outward semblance of good, for we must keep a jealous eye even upon our good works; and, that we may not be duped, let us make known to our Director the good which we do, and abide in all things by his decision.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HOW TO ABIDE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

"*Nostra autem conversatio in cœlis est.*"—AD PHILIPP. iij. 20.

Introduction.—What a happiness it is to live always in the Presence of God, a habit which the Apostle calls the conversation of the soul in heaven. This is a practice which keeps the soul from sin, and is the fruitful source of all the virtues. That we may have a share in these blessed fruits, let us learn how to walk continually in the presence of God.

Proposition.—To preserve the presence of God in our souls, we have need of reflection, to think of it, and of faith, to believe. The presence of God is maintained: (1.) By means of the imagination (i. nn. 288, 289); (2.) By the help of faith (i. nn. 290, 291, 303; (3.) In the depths of the heart (i. nn. 292—294).

Conclusion.—Let us have recourse to faith, that we may walk habitually in the presence of God.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

ON THE ESSENCE OF FAITH.

"*Cælum et terra transibunt, verba autem mea non transibunt.*"—LUC. xxj. 33.

Introduction.—As it is the wish of our Holy Mother the Church to prepare us for the coming of Jesus Christ, and as faith is the first step towards the attainment of this object, we must try to strengthen ourselves in this virtue, in such a way that not only all doubt be banished from our souls, but that our faith be each day made more and more lively.

Proposition.—Our faith should be firm. (1.) Because it is evident that its articles have been revealed by God (iv. nn. 8, 9, 10). (2.) Because when God reveals, we cannot withhold belief (ibid. from n. 11 to the end).

Conclusion.—Let us enkindle in our hearts a firm and lively faith, and let us be not only willing, but eager, to hear the Word of God. In order to acquire both a firm and a lively faith, we should spend some time after the sermon in thinking of the truths of eternity, and in the devout reading of pious books; otherwise our Divine Lord will not come down into our hearts.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

THE GROUNDS OF HOPE.

"*Ut per patientiam et consolationem Scripturarum spem habeamus.*"—AD ROM. xv. 4.

Introduction.—If we mean to prepare for our Divine Guest a dwelling worthy of Him, our hearts must be not only strong in faith, but also steadfast in hope. Therefore does the Apostle say, *spem habeamus*, "let us be hopeful;" for without hope all is weakness, and our hearts are nerveless in the practice of virtue,

without which we cannot expect the coming of Jesus Christ. To-day, then, we will encourage ourselves by considering the grounds which we have for hope.

Proposition.—We may look for all blessings from the goodness of God, as well because He has promised to bestow them upon us, as because He is all-powerful, and infinitely faithful to His promises. (1.) The promises made by God (iv. n. 72). (2.) The power and faithfulness of God (ibid. from n. 73 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Hence, we must never lose sight of the grounds of our hope, if we desire to be securely rooted and to persevere in this virtue; but much more so if we further wish to prepare a suitable dwelling for God in our souls, since He will never enter into a heart whose hope is wavering; for to fail in hope is to do Him a grievous injury.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

OF HUMILITY.

"*Cujus non sum dignus, ut solvam corrigiam calceamenti ejus.*"—JOAN i. 27.

Introduction.—Several characteristics of the extraordinary humility of St. John the Baptist, recorded in Holy Writ, are to-day set before us, that we may learn how to dispose ourselves by this virtue for the coming of the Redeemer. Our Divine Master tramples the proud under His feet, and takes delight only in humble souls. We have here the means of learning how to acquire this priceless virtue.

Proposition.—There are two kinds of humility—of the understanding, and of the heart. (1.) Humility of the understanding, or of knowledge (iij. n. 496). (2). Humility of the heart, or of affection (ibid. nn. 497, 498, 499, and the following).

Conclusion.—We must exert every effort to acquire the virtue of humility, chiefly that of the heart, that so we may learn to

contemn ourselves, and to conceive a low and mean idea of our being: otherwise our Divine Master will refuse to be born into our hearts.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

MAN IN THE ORDER OF GRACE.

"*Omnis mons et collis humiliabitur.*"—Luc. iij. 8.

Introduction.—No one finds any difficulty in admitting that man is nothing in the order of nature; but how few are aware that the same may be said of him in the order of grace! Now, as at the coming of Christ, not only every mountain, but every hill, was to be brought low; let us see to-day what man is in the order of grace.

Proposition.—Man ought to entertain a very mean idea of himself, because in the order of grace he is naught (iij. n. 513 to n. 517 inclusively).

Conclusion.—Let us often reflect that we are incapable of doing any good or acquiring any merit, unless Divine Goodness bestow the power upon us by means of supernatural grace. Thus shall we persevere in sentiments of humility and of self-contempt, so that Jesus Christ will find in our hearts a sanctuary worthy to receive Him.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS DAY.

OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HOPE.

"*Misit Deus spiritum Filii sui in corda vestra clamantem: Abba, Pater.*"—Ad Galat. iv. 6.

Introduction.—How infinitely worthy of love is the Spirit of the Son of God, Who cries aloud in our hearts, Abba, Father! How great the courage He is capable of instilling in the hour of

adversity! And so little impression is produced upon our hearts: the reason is, because we put our trust in ourselves, and are for ever faltering. That this shall be no longer so must be our firm resolve to-day.

Proposition.—Our trust in God must be staunch, and it must be founded on God alone. I say: (1.) That our hope must be founded on God alone (iv., n. 79 to n. 87); (2.) That it must never waver (iv., from n. 87 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us put our hope in God alone, and say to Him from the bottom of our hearts, Abba, Father! O Lord God, Thou art my hope and my safety. Woe to us, if we lean upon ourselves; for if we do we needs must waver, and he whose heart is ever faltering has no right to expect the least grace from God.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF PATIENCE.

"*Et tuam ipsius animam pertransibit gladius.*"—Luc. ij. 35.

Introduction.—However full of bitterness was the prophecy of Simeon, it never for a moment disturbed the calm peace of Mary's soul, because patience had taken deep root in her heart. We, too, must have recourse to this virtue in the hour of trial, and that we may be the better able to do so, let us study the character and necessity of patience.

Proposition.—Such is the power of the virtue of patience to calm the trouble of our souls, that we are brought by it to bear the load of present ills in a spirit of humble and calm resignation: (1.) The nature of patience (iii., nn. 335, 336); (2.) The need we have of patience (vide Section III., n. 337, and the following).

Conclusion.—That we may be enabled to possess our souls in peace in the midst of tribulation, we must exercise ourselves unceasingly in patience; it is an exercise sovereignly necessary.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME.

OF THE ESSENCE AND EXCELLENCE OF THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION.

"*Non est in alio aliquo salus.*"—ACT. iv. 12.

Introduction.—As our salvation depends wholly upon Jesus Christ, it is reasonable that we should pay homage to His Holy Name: and that we may do this with greater spiritual profit, we will examine the nature and the excellence of the virtue of religion.

Proposition.—Religion gives to God the worship which is due to Him, as the Author of all things. Hence the excellence of this virtue cannot be called in question: (1.) Because religion has for its object God, as the Author of all created things (iii., nn. 157, 159); (2.) Because we are brought nearer to God by religion than by any other virtue, be it what it may (vide ibid. nn. 160—162, and the following).

Conclusion.—Let us labour with all energy and zeal to acquire this virtue, that so God may receive, both from us and from our neighbour, the homage sovereignly due to Him, and that the Holy Name of Jesus may be for ever blessed.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST A MOTIVE OF PATIENCE.

"*Vocatum est nomen ejus Jesus.*"—LUC. ij. 21.

Introduction.—Because Jesus Christ humbled Himself to the death of the Cross, therefore, in the words of St. Paul, God has exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every other name. To obtain a glorious name in heaven we must walk in the footsteps of our Divine Master, bearing His Holy Name in our hearts, and keeping before our eyes the example of His patience in the midst of sorrow and tribulation.

Proposition.—The example of Jesus Christ is a powerful motive to the patient endurance of sufferings and trials (iii. 347—352).

Conclusion.—Let us keep steadily in view the griefs and the torments borne with such wonderful patience by our loving Redeemer; for what are the most grievous panis and troubles of this life in comparison with the sufferings of Jesus Christ? It is impossible not to draw from this consideration the patience necessary to earn for us an eternal crown of glory with Jesus in heaven.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

OF THE DIFFERENT DEGREES OF THE LOVE OF OUR ENEMIES.

"*Si esurierit inimicus tuus, ciba illum: si sitit, potum da illi.*"—ROM. xij. 20.

Introduction.—The Love of our Enemies implies not only the fulfilment of the primary precepts of the law, but also a higher standard of perfection in the close imitation of Jesus Christ, which so heroic a love involves; for he who loves his neighbour, observes the entire law. We will develop the conditions required by this love of our enemies, according to the doctrine of the Apostle St. Paul.

Proposition.—The fulfilment of Christ's command to love our enemies requires: (1.) That we forgive them from our heart (iv., from n. 328 to n. 334); (2.) That we return them good for evil (ibid. from n. 334 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us measure our conduct to our enemies by the nobler of these two standards, and let us humble ourselves at the sight of our backwardness in this respect; resolving, by God's grace, to imitate the heroic example of our Saviour, in returning good for evil.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE PROPERTIES OF FAITH.

"*Non inveni tantam fidem in Israël.*"—MATTH. viij. 10.

Introduction.—These words of Jesus Christ bear witness to the noble faith of the Centurion, placing it on a level with the faith of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. That our faith may some day merit the like commendation, and that we may to this end understand the excellence of this virtue, we will discuss the nature of faith, and examine into its properties.

Proposition.—Our faith must possess the qualities: (1.) Of simplicity and firmness (iv., from n. 16 to n. 24); (2.) Of fortitude and constancy (ibid. from n. 24 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let every one, then, test the character of his faith, and if he find it wanting in any one of the conditions mentioned above, let him hasten to rekindle this precious virtue in his soul, by serious reflection on the motives which we have indicated in this instruction. Faith alone can insure to us the inheritance of eternal happiness.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

OF THE USEFULNESS OF CHARITY TO OUR NEIGHBOUR.

"*Qui diligit proximum suum legem implevit.*"—ROM. xiij. 8.

Introduction.—How precious is the virtue of charity, by which we fulfil the whole law! And yet we hold this virtue in so little account, that hatred, envy, enmity, anger, and injustice, in one shape or another, are constantly usurping its place in our hearts, and all because we have not learned to appreciate at its true value the eminently Christian virtue of charity.

Proposition.—By no virtue can we so easily secure our salvation as by the love of our neighbour: (1.) Because it heals the

wounds of our souls inflicted by past sin (iv. nn. 309, 310); (2.) Because it preserves the innocence which we have recovered from being tarnished anew (ibid. n. 311 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us, then, betake ourselves to the practice of the works of mercy, that we may render our eternal salvation certain; and let us place no reliance on any other virtue, so long as it does not go hand in hand with charity. Let us exert every effort to uproot from our hearts whatever is incompatible with this virtue, ever keeping steadily in view the spiritual advantages which are inseparable from the love of our neighbour.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF TEMPTATIONS AGAINST FAITH.

"*Quid timidi estis, modicæ fidei?*"—MATTH. viij. 26.

Introduction.—The reproach made on this occasion by our Saviour to His disciples was most just, since in the company of Jesus Christ they ought to have been proof against fear. This same rebuke may in all fairness be administered to those timid souls which are constantly giving way to groundless alarms; but particularly to such as lose heart and take fright on the first appearance of a temptation against faith: let them consider the following.

Proposition.—That temptation, so far from weakening, will, on the contrary, strengthen our faith, provided only we keep our curiosity under proper control. (1.) Faith gathers strength from temptation (iv. nn. 55, 59). (2.) An excessive and inquisitive scrutiny into the articles of our faith is to be shunned (ibid. n. 57).

Conclusion.—No one should be discouraged by temptations against faith. We must spurn them, and abstaining from too much eagerness to investigate the mysteries of our faith, give ourselves up to the practice of good works, content here below to see the truth *tanquam in ænigmate*.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

OF THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.

"Super omnia autem caritatem habete, quod est vinculum perfectionis." —AD COLOSS. iij. 14.

Introduction.—In the Epistle of to-day, St. Paul addresses us a very timely exhortation to charity, a matter in which we are but too often very careless. It is to be feared that our many sins against this fundamental virtue, come from our ignorance or want of consideration of the duties imposed upon us by the great law of charity.

Proposition.—The practice of charity is enjoined: (1.) By a strict and rigorous precept (iv. nn. 296—302); (2.) By a precept which our Lord inculcated in the most precise and solemn terms (ibid. n. 302 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—The love of our neighbour is the first duty of every Christian. Let us therefore endeavour to correct our shortcomings in this respect, by adopting the means indicated in this instruction.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

OF THE VIRTUE OF FAITH IN PRACTICE.

"Simile est regnum cælorum fermento."—MATTH. xiij. 33.

Introduction.—A little leaven soon leavens a great quantity of flour: in like manner, our Faith, quickened by the Word of God, though at first it influences but a small number of our actions, yet, if fostered by an attentive meditation of the eternal truths and of the Word of God, it will soon pervade and vivify every action of our lives.

Proposition.—There is room for the exercise of faith, not only in practices of devotion, but much more in the hour of trial and temptation. (1.) Faith must regulate our practices of devotion (iv. nn. 44—50). (2.) Faith must be the rule of all our works (ibid. nn. 43 and 50 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let faith be the life and soul of all our actions: but since it will not always bring with it light and consolation, let us learn to act from faith, even when it is obscured by passing clouds (iv. n. 60).

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

HOW TO TEST OUR LOVE OF GOD.

"*In laboribus plurimis, in carceribus abundantius, in plagis supra modum.*"—II. AD. COR. xj. 23.

Introduction.—The Apostle St. Paul speaks to us, to-day, at greater length of the painful trials to which his patience was put than of the privileges and favours vouchsafed to him by God; in so doing, he would seem to wish to undeceive us as to the mistake we fall into, so often as we make the love of God to consist rather in a certain sweetness of affection than in patience under trial, for this latter is the real touchstone of genuine love of God.

Proposition.—(1.) The measure of our love of God is not a sensible tenderness of affection (iv. nn. 210—213). (2.) But it is found in our patience under trials (ibid. from n. 213 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—To ascertain the true character of our love, we must examine, not so much our feelings and affections, as the works we do for God: if we bear our crosses in resignation to the divine will, then, indeed, is our love of God beyond suspicion.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

OF CHARITY.

"*Si caritatem non habuero, nihil sum.*"—AD COR. xiij. 2.

Introduction.—In the Epistle of to-day, the Apostle declares to us, in the most solemn terms, that it will profit a man nothing to

speak with the tongues of men and angels, if he have not charity: that the knowledge of every mystery and science, a faith strong enough to move mountains, the plentiful distribution of alms, the giving up of one's body to the flames, is labour in vain, in default of the fundamental virtue of charity.

Proposition.—Charity is the source and origin of every virtue: (1.) Because there can be no virtue without charity (iv. nn. 141—146); (2.) Because every other virtue follows in the wake of charity (ibid. from n. 146 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We shall obtain every blessing from God, if, by doing our utmost to eradicate from our hearts whatever is opposed to this virtue, and using the necessary means, we at last attain to a degree of charity so high that our every action shall be thoroughly imbued with it.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

OF WANT OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

"*Surgite et nolite timere.*"—MATTH. xvij. 7.

Introduction.—We are told in the Gospel of this Sunday that a great fear came upon the Apostles. This is not unfrequently the case with us. The command given us by God to listen to the voice of His Son, to take up our cross and to follow Jesus Christ, fills us with discouragement and dismay; because, instead of putting our trust in God, we allow the consideration of our own weakness to take too strong a hold of our imagination.

Proposition.—Mistrust of God, or a want of confidence in Him, is a vice to which we must never on any account yield. (1.) It is a great evil (iv. nn. 122—127). (2.) There never can be any reason to give way to mistrust (ibid. from n. 127 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us be ever on our guard, lest, under the guise of piety, mistrust steal into our hearts; when fear comes upon us we should re-animate our courage by strengthening our hope.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

OF THE NECESSITY OF HUMILITY.

"*Facite homines discumbere.*"—JOAN. vj. 10.

Introduction.—We observe in the Gospel of this Sunday, that the five thousand so miraculously fed by our Blessed Lord, were bidden to seat themselves in lowliness upon the ground, before they could be admitted to a share in the divine bounty. We too must humble ourselves, if we desire to receive favours from God; for He does not pour His gifts into any but humble vessels. That we may be convinced of this truth, let us meditate upon the virtue of humility.

Proposition.—Humility is sovereignly necessary: (1.) Because it is the foundation of all virtue (iij. nn. 549, 555); (2.) Because it maintains every other virtue in the soul (ibid. nn. 556, 559, and the following).

Conclusion.—Whosoever would build up the spiritual edifice upon a solid foundation, or is desirous of making progress in virtue and of securing the virtues he may have already acquired, must labour incessantly to attain to the perfection of this noble virtue.

PASSION SUNDAY.

OF THE THREE DEGREES OF PATIENCE.

"*Jesus autem abscondit se, et exivit a templo.*"—JOAN. viij. 59.

Introduction.—The Gospel of this Sunday sets before our eyes a splendid example of Patience in the person of Jesus Christ, Who, when threatened by the ungrateful Jews with death by stoning, on account of the noble doctrine He preached and the countless favours He bestowed with open hand wherever He went, so far from exerting His power to be revenged upon His enemies, withdrew calm and unmoved out of the reach of their

evil treatment. Christ, no doubt, acted thus to teach us to possess our souls in peace; nay, even to rejoice in the midst of adversity.

Proposition.—The devout person must rise to three degrees of perfection in the practice of patience: (1.) By mastering his sorrowfulness so far at least as to conceal it from his neighbour (iij. n. 375); (2.) By preserving tranquillity of soul in the midst even of the most painful trials (ibid. nn. 376, 377); (3.) By suffering tribulation with joy (ibid. nn. 378, 379).

Conclusion.—These three degrees make up the perfection of patience, to which we must strive to attain, chiefly by repressing every sorrowful emotion when we become the prey of trial and affliction.

PALM SUNDAY.

OF THE NECESSITY OF MEEKNESS.

"*Ecce rex tuus venit tibi mansuetus.*"—MATTH. xxj. 5.

Introduction.—The Prophet Isaias had foretold of our Lord, that He would come to us in the guise of a King full of meekness; but more than this, that His meekness was to be so great that He would not extinguish the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. In Jesus Christ we have a noble example of meekness for our imitation.

Proposition.—Meekness is indispensably necessary to man: (1.) Without this virtue he is not even a reasonable being (iij. nn. 449—453 and the following); (2.) Much less is he a Christian (ibid. nn. 456—462).

Conclusion.—Having admitted the necessity of meekness, let us adopt every means in our power to attain with the blessing of God to a close imitation of the meekness of Jesus Christ, by keeping a check upon our propensity to anger, that so, according to the solemn promise of our Divine Master, we may with the meek possess the land here, and merit a crown of glory hereafter.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

THE MOTIVES OF OBEDIENCE.

"*Euntes autem discipuli fecerunt sicut præcepit illis Jesus.*"—MATTH. xxj. 6.

Introduction.—Our Lord Jesus Christ gave His Apostles the most unmistakable proofs of divine favour in sending down upon them the Holy Ghost to initiate them into the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in constituting them the rulers of the world. Now these wonderful privileges were the fruit, principally, of their perfect obedience to Christ; we, therefore, in our turn, should set no less store by this virtue, and often meditate upon the motives which excite to the practice of obedience.

Proposition.—These motives are chiefly three: (1.) The first is, that our superior holds the place of God (iij. nn. 313—323); (2.) The second, that obedience cannot lead us astray (ibid. nn. 324, 325; (3.) The third, that Jesus Christ has given us a memorable example of obedience (ibid. n. 327).

Conclusion.—(iij. n. 327).

EASTER SUNDAY.

OF THE NATURE OF HOPE.

"*Surrexit, non est hic.*"—MARC. xvj. 6.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ rising from the tomb, His Sacred Humanity clothed with the four glorious privileges of immortality, gives us the assured hope of our own resurrection. Cheered by this hope, we are enabled to overcome every difficulty, and to face every trial with an intrepid and a joyful heart, considering that the ills of this short life are not to be put in comparison with the eternal happiness which awaits us in the next. Let us endeavour on this great day to re-animate our hope.

Proposition.—Hope not only enlarges the heart, but it also fills us with joy as well: (1.) It dilates the heart (iv. nn. 96—100); (2.) It gladdens the heart (ibid. from n. 100 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us ground ourselves firmly in hope, often eliciting acts of this virtue, that we may run with joy in the way of God's commandments.

LOW SUNDAY.

OF THE LOVE OF COMPLACENCY.

"*Dominus meus et Deus meus!*"—JOAN. xx. 28.

Introduction.—What strength and joy must have been poured into the soul of St. Thomas when, with a heart inflamed by love, he gave utterance to that noble act of faith in the words of our text, "My Lord and my God!" And we, on the contrary, are so weak and sad in adversity. This would not be so if, like St. Thomas, we were actuated by a love of complacency.

Proposition.—A love of complacency towards God is not only a source of joy to us, but is also an efficacious solace in the hour of trouble. (1.) This love is a source of holy joy (iv. nn. 171—176). (2.) It comforts us in misfortune (ibid. from n. 176 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—A frequent meditation on the infinite perfection and happiness of God, enables us to run with a light heart in the way of His commandments, and to bear up bravely against the ills which must assail us on every side during the course of our earthly pilgrimage.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

OF THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY.

"*Animam meam pono pro ovibus meis.*"—JOAN. x. 15.

Introduction.—The Gospel of to-day pictures Jesus Christ to us as the Good Shepherd, Who, not content with a most loving and zealous performance of the works of mercy, must needs lay down His life for His sheep. His purpose was to induce us by His own example to be merciful to our neighbour, whose spiritual

interests He has confided to our care. The spiritual works of mercy are a duty incumbent especially upon parents, and in general upon all superiors.

Proposition.—As the spiritual far surpass in excellence the corporal works of mercy, we should endeavour to perform them with all possible zeal. (1.) Spiritual works of mercy hold the first place among deeds of charity to our neighbour (iv. nn. 357—360). (2.) We must perform them with zeal (ibid. from n. 360 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Zeal, not only for our own salvation, but also for that of our neighbour, is a virtue most pleasing to God and a source of great merit.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

HOW TO ACQUIRE THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE.

"*Christus passus est pro nobis, vobis relinquens exemplum, ut sequamini vestigia ejus.*"—I. PET. ij. 21.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ is a perfect model of every virtue, which He first put into practice, and then began to teach. But of all the examples He has left us, none is more striking than that of the heroic patience with which He bore the sharpest sufferings it is possible for man to endure.

Proposition.—Suffering is to be borne with patience, because we deserve it, and because it is beneficial. (1.) As sinners, we deserve to suffer (iij. nn. 339, 340). (2.) Suffering is beneficial to the just as well as to sinners (ibid. nn. 341—345).

Conclusion.—The frequent and attentive consideration of the punishment which our sins and our tepidity in the service of God have deserved, and still deserve daily, will help us to bear patiently the trials it may please Divine Providence to send us.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

OF FORTITUDE.

"*Plorabitis et flebitis vos, mundus autem gaudebit.*"—JOAN. xvj. 20.

Introduction.—It is hard to bear injuries and affronts at the hands of our fellow-men, and not to be afflicted by them. But our Blessed Lord furnishes us with an antidote in the virtue of fortitude, to which we must have recourse if we desire to see our grief turned into joy.

Proposition.—Fortitude overcomes every difficulty, even the most arduous. (1.) Ordinary difficulties may be surmounted by no matter what virtue (iij. n. 87). (2.) But fortitude alone triumphs over extraordinary difficulties (ibid. nn. 88, 89).

Conclusion.—The fruit to be derived from these considerations is a great esteem of the virtue of fortitude, with a sincere desire to acquire it, in order to overcome every obstacle in the path of virtue, &c.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF OBEDIENCE.

"*Subjecti estote omni humanæ creaturæ propter Deum.*"—I. PET. ij. 13.

Introduction.—St. Peter inculcates upon us, in the Epistle of to-day, the practice of such virtues as the mortification of carnal desires, the giving of good example, brotherly love, the fear of God, respect for authority, &c., but he lays particular stress upon the virtue of obedience.

Proposition.—Obedience is a virtue which renders us prompt to execute the will of another, and it is binding upon all who are subject to lawfully constituted superiors. (1.) The nature of obedience (iij. nn. 261—263). (2.) The duty of inferiors or subjects (ibid. nn. 264—271).

Conclusion.—We ought not to have anything so much at heart as a ready and cheerful submission to the will of our superiors, even in matters of great difficulty.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE ASCENSION.

OF THE VIRTUE OF PRUDENCE.

"*Estote prudentes.*"—I. PET. iv. 7.

Introduction.—No man thinks himself less prudent than his neighbour, though there are many men absolutely ignorant of the nature of this virtue, which they either confound with shrewdness and cunning, or make to consist in the light of reason alone. Since the Apostle St. Peter exhorts us to-day to the practice of this virtue, we cannot do better than examine, that we may understand, the nature of prudence.

Proposition.—Prudence is made up of three integral parts: (1.) Counsel (iij. nn. 10—15; (2.) Judgment (ibid. n. 16); (3.) Command (ibid. nn. 17, 18).

Conclusion.—We ought to mistrust our own judgment, and seek advice from persons endowed with prudence; striving in all things to walk warily.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE EFFECTS OF FORTITUDE.

"*Vos testimonium perhibebitis de me.*"—JOAN. xv. 27.

Introduction.—In the Gospel of this Sunday, we read that Jesus Christ foreshadowed to His followers the many woes, nay, the violent death, which were the destined lot of such as should bear witness to His Name upon earth; but He did not fail, at the same time, to console them with the promise of the gift of fortitude, to make them proof against the most formidable evils. Since we stand in great need of this virtue to make us steadfast

in tribulation, let us briefly consider the effects wrought in the soul by the spirit of fortitude.

Proposition.—According to the teaching of St. Thomas, the effect of fortitude is twofold: (1.) It steels the soul against the dread of death (iij. nn. 90, 91); (2.) It gives the soul courage to be beforehand with the occasions of difficulties (ibid. 92, 93, and the following).

Conclusion.—Let us always keep in view the powerful effects of this virtue, that we may not be dejected by trifling annoyances of everyday occurrence, nor faint under the weight of heavier trials.

WHIT-SUNDAY.

OF THE EXCELLENCE OF OBEDIENCE.

"*Sicut mandatum dedit mihi Pater, sic facio.*"—JOAN. xiv. 31.

Introduction.—As in the text just quoted, Jesus Christ explained to His disciples the perfection of His own obedience to the Eternal Father, thereby inciting them to follow the example set them in this respect; so did the Holy Ghost, descending upon the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues, enable them to practise this virtue in an heroic degree, by making them in all things perfectly submissive to the will of God. If we would be guided by the Holy Spirit, we must be obedient, as the same Holy Ghost tells us by the mouth of Jesus, that "He who heareth you, heareth Me."

Proposition.—Obedience ranks very high among the virtues: (1.) Because by this virtue we offer to God whatever we have most precious to give away (iij. nn. 276, 285, 286); (2.) Because with obedience every other virtue enters into the soul (ibid. nn. 277—282).

Conclusion.—Now that we understand the value of obedience, let us do our best to acquire and practise this great virtue.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HUMILITY OF HEART TOWARDS GOD.

"*Humiliamini sub potenti manu Dei.*"—I. PET. v. 6.

Introduction.—Holy Writ tells us that the penance of one sinner gives more joy to the Angels in Heaven than the good works of ninety-nine just souls. The reason of this is not far to seek, and is to be found in the predilection of God for the virtue of humility. Hence St. Peter's exhortation to us to humble ourselves beneath the mighty hand of God.

Proposition.—Humility of heart towards God consists in a reverent and devout submission to Him: (1.) Because by this virtue we give all glory to God alone (iij. nn. 518—520); (2.) Because by it we attribute none of our excellences to ourselves (ibid. nn. 521—525).

Conclusion.—Let us, therefore, refer to God, the Giver of every good gift, whatever excellence we may possess; far from courting or welcoming, let us shun the empty praises of our fellow-men.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF JUSTICE.

"*Nisi justitia vestra abundaverit.*"—MATTH. v. 20.

Introduction.—Justice is sometimes considered, in a wide and general meaning, as the compendium of all the moral virtues, and in this sense Christ is speaking of it in the Gospel of this Sunday. But justice may also be taken in a more restricted sense, as that special virtue which consists in a firm and steadfast resolve to give to every man his due. We will consider it to-day in this its more limited meaning, and endeavour to incite ourselves to the practice, by meditating on the excellence, of this virtue.

Proposition.—Justice is excellent by nature, because it constitutes: (1.) The essence, (iij. nn. 48—50); and (2.) The excellence, of every other virtue (ibid. nn. 51—55).

Conclusion.—We must endeavour to become possessed of this virtue, if we would not with the Pharisees be condemned as hypocrites.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

HOW TO CONFORM OURSELVES TO THE WILL OF GOD.

"*Quis est qui vobis noceat, si boni æmulatores fueritis?*"—I. PET. iij. 13.

Introduction.—Although we are in general resolved to do the will of God in all things, and to take whatever befalls us as coming from His hand for our greater good, yet no sooner are we assailed by adversity, or deprived of supernatural help and left a prey to spiritual dryness, than we lose heart, forgetting that nothing can do us harm so long as we remain staunch and faithful in the service of God. The following principles will serve as a remedy to this fault.

Proposition.—We must learn by degrees to conform our will to the will of God, even in things spiritual. (1.) How we are to set about this (iv. nn. 289—293). (2.) This conformity must extend to spiritual matters (ibid. from n. 294 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must have recourse to ejaculatory prayers, and to such other means as have just been pointed out, striving to resign ourselves to the will of God in the supernatural as well as in the natural order of things.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE PRACTICE OF TEMPERANCE.

"*Quot panes habetis?*"—MARC. viij. 5.

Introduction.—To appease the hunger of the crowd which followed Him, Jesus Christ gave them nothing more dainty than the loaves and fishes, which He had miraculously multiplied,

although He might as easily have set before them a feast of exquisite viands. Perhaps He wished to give the multitude and us a lesson of temperance.

Proposition.—The virtue of temperance permits us to give the body: (1.) Not only the nourishment which is absolutely necessary for the support of life (iij. 142, 143); (2.) but also that which is requisite for its befitting maintenance (ibid. nn. 144—147).

Conclusion.—Let us endeavour never to go beyond the bounds of temperance in eating and drinking; but on the contrary, to keep within the limits of what is needful for the due preservation of our health and strength.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD.

"*Qui facit voluntatem Patris mei qui in cœlis est, ipse intrabit in regnum cœlorum.*"—MATTH. vij. 21.

Introduction.—There are many persons who make great efforts to produce frequent acts of the love of God, and cry aloud with great fervour, "Lord, Lord," but who seldom, or never, stop to consider how far their actions are in conformity with the Divine Will. Such souls as these run great risk of going quite astray from the path of salvation, and are but little, if at all, animated by the spirit of true charity. Let us examine and see how our will should be subordinated to that of God.

Proposition.—Conformity to the will of God is: (1.) Sovereignly meritorious (iv. nn. 221—227); (2.) It consists chiefly in an act of charity (ibid. from n. 228 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must take the greatest pains to regulate our will by the will of God, and to keep the divine pleasure steadily in view in the midst of all the good or evil which may fall to our lot here below.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE EXCELLENCE OF TEMPERANCE SHOWN BY CONTRAST WITH THE CONTRARY VICE.

"*Sedit populus manducare et bibere, et surrexerunt ludere.*"—I. AD CORINTH. x. 7.

Introduction.—St. Paul sets before us in the Epistle of this day a variety of crimes, such as idolatry, intemperance, fornication, murmuring and rebellion against God, together with the punishment which these sins provoke; in order to teach us to resist our evil propensities, to overcome temptation, and to practise the virtues opposed to the vices which he enumerates. Let us single out from the list the vice of intemperance and confront it with its contrary virtue, sobriety.

Proposition.—Temperance is a virtue as beautiful as intemperance is loathsome. (1.) The hideousness of intemperance (iij. nn. 131—138). (2.) The beauty of temperance (ibid. n. 140 and the following).

Conclusion.—Charmed with the beauty of temperance, let us do our utmost to acquire this virtue, and let us recoil with horror from the brutish vice opposed to it.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE THE ROAD TO HUMILITY.

"*Non sum sicut cæteri homines.*"—LUC. xviij. 11.

Introduction.—The Pharisee of whom we read to-day is indeed deserving of pity; for so far from getting any reward for his fasting, almsdeeds, and other good works, he was even esteemed by God below a public sinner; and all this because he took a foolish pride in his good actions, attributing them to himself, whilst, on the contrary, his rival the publican went home justified, because his knowledge of his own sinfulness had brought him to sentiments of true humility. Let us humble ourselves beneath the powerful

hand of God, and strive to obtain a thorough knowledge of our own hearts.

Proposition.—The knowledge of his nothingness maketh a man humble. (1.) The only thing which we can truly call our own is sin (iij. nn. 501—504). (2.) Nothing is so humbling as sin (ibid. nn. 505—512).

Conclusion.—Let us often look down into the depths of our nothingness, in the order of nature, and then go on to reflect how we are besides weighed down by the load of the sins which we have committed.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HOW TO PRACTISE THE VIRTUE OF HOPE.

"*Jesu, præceptor, miserere nostri.*"—LUC. xvij. 13.

Introduction.—The lepers mentioned in this Gospel were made whole, because their prayer for health was full of confidence. Happy indeed should we be if we could make of our lives one uninterrupted act of hope; for then, no matter what our difficulties, we should always come out of the battle victorious.

Proposition.—There is room for the practice of hope, not only in time of prayer and in moments of discouragement, but also in the hour of trial and temptation. We must practise this virtue: (1.) At our prayer, and when we are overtaken by fear (iv. nn. 111—117); (2.) When we are a prey to affliction and temptation (ibid. from n. 117 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must never despair, but under all circumstances make of hope our anchor, with which we shall ride secure, and weather every storm raised up against us by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF THE SPECIAL ACTS OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

"*Non est inventus qui rediret et daret gloriam Deo, nisi hic alienigena.*"—Luc. xvij. 18.

Introduction.—There are many Christians whose conduct is as open to the reproach of thanklessness as was that of the nine lepers mentioned in the Gospel, since in spite of the gifts of nature and of grace showered upon them by God, there are so few who think of making Him a return of gratitude, of giving glory to Him, or of paying Him the worship which is due. To remedy this evil, let us consider the several acts included in religious worship.

Proposition.—The acts of religious worship are threefold: (1.) Acts of adoration (iij. nn. 174—178); (2.) Acts of praise (ibid. n. 179); (3.) Prayer (ibid. nn. 180, 181).

Conclusion.—Let us acquire the habit of giving to God this triple homage of adoration, praise, and prayer, in order thus to pay Him, in so far as we may, the tribute which is His due by so many titles.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF THE OBJECT OF THEOLOGICAL HOPE.

"*Quærite primum regnum Dei et justitiam ejus, et hæc omnia adjicientur vobis.*"—Matth. vj. 33.

Introduction.—On the one hand, the want of confidence, which is the object of Christ's invective to-day, and which He proves, by the clearest reasoning, to be without any foundation, deprives us of all the effects which spring from hope: and on the other hand, we really prefer our unruly cravings and appetites to God and His kingdom, when in our prayers we insist upon obtaining, at any price, some temporal blessing.

Proposition.—God alone is the primary object, creatures are

but the secondary object of theological hope. (1.) God is the primary (iv. nn. 62—68); (2.) Creatures are the secondary, object of this virtue (ibid. nn. 69—71).

Conclusion.—It is therefore our duty to place our every hope in God, our only happiness, our last end, Who can alone satisfy the cravings of our souls. Nothing out of Him is to be esteemed or desired, but as a means to the one end.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE DEGREES OF PERFECT FORTITUDE.

"*Virtute corroborari per spiritum ejus in interiorem hominem.*"—AD EPHES. iij. 16.

Introduction.—According to Thomas à Kempis, the state of an interior person consists in walking inwardly with God, and in detachment from every outward object. But more than this, the spiritual man, besides conversing inwardly with God, also extends his love to his neighbour, and is thereby made superior to and fearless in every danger. Such Fortitude as this is the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Proposition.—We must endeavour to become possessed of this virtue, because it subdues our evil passions and gives a strong love for our neighbour. (1.) It enables us to mortify our passions (iij. nn. 99—101). (2.) It gives us a sturdy and energetic love for our neighbour (ibid. n. 102).

Conclusion.—Let us give ourselves in an especial manner to the mortification of our passions, since the Holy Ghost teaches us (Prov. xvj.) that the patient man has the advantage over the strong man, and that he who keeps his soul under the yoke is a better man than he who takes cities.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

HUMILITY OF HEART TOWARDS MEN.

"*Recumbe in novissimo loco.*"—Luc. xiv. 9.

Introduction.—Our Lord clearly sets before us in this Gospel how deep our shame will be, if, after having been preferred to our fellow-men in this world, we are forced to make way for them in the next. Let us, then, in the spirit of this parable, examine to-day, and see how much pleasure we give to God, and what honour we gain for ourselves as often as we place ourselves beneath every one else.

Proposition.—God looks on with satisfaction when He beholds us taking the last place. (1.) We must esteem ourselves inferior to everybody (iij. nn. 526—531). (2.) Such humility as this is most pleasing to God (ibid. nn. 532—534).

Conclusion.—If we frequently think of the sins which we have committed during the course of our lives, and meditate upon our unhappy propensity to evil, we shall not fail to place ourselves beneath our fellow-men, and none of us will be found to prefer himself to his neighbour.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

OF MEEKNESS.

"*Cum omni humilitate et mansuetudine, cum patientia.*"—Ad Ephes. iv. 2.

Introduction.—It might be imagined at first sight that there is no distinction between patience and meekness, and that the Apostle St. Paul labours in vain to establish a difference between these two virtues, inasmuch as the patient man never gives way to anger any more than the meek man. An examination into the nature of each of these virtues, illustrated by a few examples, will help us to understand the difference between meekness and patience.

Proposition.—Meekness tempers anger, and in this it differs

from patience. (1.) The distinction arises from the nature of meekness (iij. n. 444). (2.) This assertion is proved by examples (ibid. nn. 445—447).

Conclusion.—Let us conceive a great love for the virtue of meekness, in order that we may set a good example to our neighbour, and that we may have it in our power to check the excesses of anger.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

HOW TO ACQUIRE PRUDENCE.

"*Nolite fieri imprudentes, sed intelligentes quæ sit voluntas Dei.*"—AD EPHES. v. 17.

Introduction.—Imprudence is a very hurtful failing, because it mars our good works, and hinders them from bearing fruit. No wonder, therefore, that the Apostle warns us against it. But how are we to attain to prudence, otherwise than by the employment of the means which will conduct us to so desirable an end?

Proposition.—We may acquire prudence in four ways: (1.) By praying for the gift of this virtue (iij. n. 29); (2.) By the mortification of our passions (ibid. nn. 30, 31); (3.) By self-examination (ibid. n. 32); (4.) By seeking the advice of others (ibid. nn. 33—36).

Conclusion.—Important and efficacious as is each of these four means, the most important and the most efficacious is earnest prayer to God for the gift of prudence.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE.

"*Nolite inebriari vino, in que est luxuria.*"—AD EPHES. v. 18.

Introduction.—The Apostle St. Paul endeavours to-day to turn us away from the vice of intemperance, by setting before us the principal effects of this vice, to wit, lust; and by enkindling in our hearts a love for the contrary virtue, I mean temperance.

Proposition.—There are two virtues of temperance: (1.) The general virtue (iij. 124); (2.) The cardinal or special virtue of temperance (ibid. nn. 127—130).

Conclusion.—This may consist in an exhortation to the practice of temperance in eating and drinking, &c.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

RESTITUTION.

"*Reddite ergo, quæ sunt Cæsaris, Cæsari.*"—MATTH. xxij. 21.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ not only commands us, in the Gospel of this Sunday, to give every man his due, but He also tells us that He will come to judge the world according to justice and judgment. How severe and searching will not this judgment be for thousands! For, according to St. Augustine, sin is forgiven only on the condition of our restoring what we have unjustly taken away. That we may have no occasion to dread this judgment, we will consider the obligation of restitution.

Proposition.—The law of restitution is violated by a great number of Christians: (1.) By some who, resting on fallacious opinions or hollow arguments, easily exempt themselves from this duty (iij. nn. 72, 78); (2.) By others who fail to restore ill-gotten wealth at the right time, or who, if they do make restitution, fail to make it in perfect accordance with God's law (ibid. nn. 79—83).

Conclusion.—Let every man seriously examine his conscience, to see whether he be of the number of those who transgress the precept of restitution. It is of the last importance to have a right understanding of the obligation we are under of restoring ill-gotten gain, and of undoing the wrong which we may have done our neighbour.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE NECESSITY OF MEEKNESS.

"*Et surgens Jesus sequebatur eum.*"—MATTH. ix. 19.

Introduction.—Amiability and meekness are distinguishing traits in the life of our Lord. The Gospel of to-day furnishes us with an instance of His gentleness and meekness, in following the Chief of the Synagogue, and in meekly rebuking the noisy crowd.

Proposition.—He who does not temper his anger by meekness, will never become a spiritual man: (1.) Because the want of this virtue is a hindrance to prayer (iij. nn. 463—465); (2.) Because he is not in a state to receive favours from God (ibid. nn. 467, 468).

Conclusion.—If we desire to give ourselves up to prayer, so as to derive benefit from it and to receive light and pious affections from heaven, we must needs check, nay utterly repress our anger.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE TWO DEGREES OF PERFECT FORTITUDE.

"*In omni virtute confortati.*"—AD COLOSS. i. 11.

Introduction.—Our inconstancy and frailty are very great indeed, for we purpose so much good and do so little. We have great need, then, of the precious gift of the Holy Ghost, I mean fortitude. To increase our esteem of this virtue, and that we may be moved to pray often to the Holy Ghost for this gift, we will consider to-day the efficaciousness of fortitude.

Proposition.—Perfect fortitude dreads no kind of martyrdom, shrinks from no trial, because: (1.) The man of fortitude undergoes even martyrdom with magnanimity (iij. nn. 103 and the

following); (2.) He accepts, even with joy, the most terrible evils (ibid. nn. 105 and the following).

Conclusion.—We must try to bear with patience, generosity, and courage, whatever happens in our daily life to annoy and trouble us, in the situation wherein we are placed by Divine Providence.

THE SAME SUNDAY.

OF FEAR UNITED WITH HOPE.

"*Erit tunc tribulatio magna.*"—MATTH. xxiv. 21.

Introduction.—Our Blessed Lord endeavours to draw us to Him, at one time by the promises of eternal rewards, at another by the threats of hell, of death, of judgment. Why this? Perhaps to teach us to mingle fear with our hope.

Proposition.—Hope imparts great strength to our souls, if it is tempered by a wholesome fear. (1.) Hope is a source of strength (iv. n. 104 and the whole Chapter). (2.) A salutary fear must go hand-in-hand with our hope (ibid. n. 91 and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us put our hope in God, and distrust ourselves: for trust in God and mistrust of ourselves are worse than useless if they be separated from each other; but their combined strength will give us certain victory over our enemies.

SERMONS FOR FEASTS OF OUR LADY AND OF THE SAINTS.

THE FEAST OF ST. ANDREW, APOSTLE.

OF DISTRACTIONS AND TEMPTATIONS AT PRAYER.

"*Dives in omnes qui invocant illum.*"—AD ROM. x. 12.

Introduction.—St. Andrew was a lover not only of the Cross but also of prayer. Obedient to the commands of Christ, and following the example of his companions the other Apostles, he devoted himself to prayer and to preaching the word of God; and even when he was hanging upon the Cross, he spent two entire days in prayer and preaching, because he knew that God is infinitely liberal to those who call upon His Name. Let us, too, after the example of this Saint, give ourselves to the practice of prayer. But if any one should say that he cannot pray, because, as often as he sets about it he is at once assailed both by distractions and by the temptations of the devil, we would make him this answer:—

Proposition.—We must not abandon prayer because of distractions and temptations during it. (1.) We must not abandon prayer on account of distractions (i. n. 181, and the rest of the Chapter). (2.) Nor on account of temptations (ibid. n. 192, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must resist the enemy by faith; and taking no heed of distractions, we must be careful not to curtail or interrupt our prayer on their account.

FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS, BISHOP

OF DISCRETION IN FASTING.

"*Optimum est gratia stabilire cor, non escis.*"—AD HEB. xiij. 9.

Introduction.—St. Nicholas was very much given in his youth to the practice of mortification in general, and to fasting in par-

ticular, because fasting keeps the passions in check, elevates the soul, gives us strength in our warfare, and enables us to merit eternal rewards. Nevertheless, the discretion of the Saint in this matter was so great, that his health was not impaired by his fasting, neither was he unfitted for work, or hindered by it from making great spiritual progress. We shall do well to walk in the footsteps of this Saint.

Proposition.—Fasting must not be allowed (1.) To injure our health (ij. nn. 93—95, 112, 113); (2.) To hinder us from fulfilling the duties of our state, or from advancing in the ways of perfection (ibid. nn. 96—99, 114, 115).

Conclusion.—Our obedience, even in respect of fasting, must be conformable to reason and common sense, that we may reap good and not harm from this holy practice (ibid. nn. 116, 117).

THE SAME SAINT'S DAY.

OF THE CURE FOR SCRUPLES.

"*Obedite præpositis vestris et subjacete eis.*"—AD HEB. xiij. 17.

Introduction.—Persons tormented by scruples are in a very sorry plight indeed, for they are incapable of good works, and their hope is, if not extinguished, at least so weakened that they are become like little children who cannot walk by themselves. St. Nicholas comes to their aid to-day, and whispers to them the advice of St. Paul, *Obey your superiors*, and you are cured.

Proposition.—Prayer, obedience, and moderation in fear, are the principal remedies of scruples. (1.) Prayer and obedience (ij. n. 441 to n. 449). (2.) Moderation in fear, and some other means (ibid. from n. 449 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let him, who is a prey to scruples, use these remedies, especially that of obedience, the most effectual of them all, according to the words of our Lord: 'He that heareth you, heareth Me," &c.

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF OUR LADY.

OF THE MODELS OF MODESTY

"*Audite disciplinam.*"—PROV. viij. 33.

Introduction.—Our Lady Conceived without Sin is at once the Model and the Protectress of purity, whether of the soul or of the body. The Immaculate Virgin addresses herself to those who honour and cherish the virtue of chastity, and she says to them, "Hearken unto the voice of instruction, be wise, and refuse it not;" that is to say, she exhorts us to the practice of modesty: for, the virtue of modesty is the safeguard of cleanness of heart, as it is its unmistakable outward mark and badge. Let us consider the means whereby we may effectually obtain and preserve the virtue of modesty.

Proposition.—To obtain true modesty, we must keep our eyes fixed upon the perfect models of this virtue. (1.) Upon the most perfect model of all (ij. nn. 146—148. (2.) Upon those models which come nearest to this perfect model (ibid. nn. 149, 150).

Conclusion.—We must never lose sight of these models if we mean to attain to perfection (ibid. n. 152).

FEAST OF SS. SEBASTIAN AND FABIAN, MARTYRS.

OF SPIRITUAL ARIDITY.

"*Beati pauperes spiritu.*"—LUC. vj. 20.

Introduction.—By poverty of spirit is meant, not only an inward disengagement from all created things, but also humility and contempt of self, so that we are moved to utter the words of the Prophet: I have been humbled exceedingly, &c. If this is true, great is the delusion of those who lose heart when they fall a prey to spiritual aridity, break off their prayer, and leave their spiritual

duties in the lurch. Let us beware of committing such a sad mistake.

Proposition.—(1.) We must not cut short our prayers on account of spiritual dryness (i. nn. 187, 188, to n. 191); (2.) But having discovered the cause of the same, we must persevere courageously in prayer (ibid. from n. 206 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must not lose heart on account of spiritual aridity, by which the saints before us have been sorely tried, but take care as far as we can to remove the cause of it, and courageously continue our prayers.

THE SAME FEAST.

HOW TO GOVERN OUR PASSIONS.

"*Convaluerunt de infirmitate.*"—AD HEB. xj. 34.

Introduction.—All our spiritual maladies may be traced to the rebellion of our unruly passions; and all we have to do to obtain eternal salvation, consists in learning how to get the upper hand of avarice, or lust, or pride, and what not. Therefore, that the example of the saints may help us to work the cure of our spiritual diseases, we will consider what line of conduct is opened out to us in this respect by the example of the saints.

Proposition.—Although we cannot hope to enjoy perfect peace in this world, we may yet acquire a very great mastery over our passions by directing them into the right channel. (1.) The passions cannot be lulled to perfect rest in this life (ij. from n. 244 to n. 247). (2.) It is good to turn them into another direction (ibid. from n. 247 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us arm ourselves with the shield of faith, and fight the good fight against our turbulent passions. But that the combat may not be too arduous, let us feed the cravings of our souls with a heavenly food, that they may not lust after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and that our passions, directed into the right channel, may be to us a source of good instead of an occasion of evil.

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

THE NEED WE STAND IN OF A DIRECTOR.

"*Vade ad Ananiam.*"—ACT. APOST. ix. 7.

Introduction.—We may perhaps be surprised to find that our Lord Jesus Christ, having Himself converted St. Paul, should send him to Ananias for instruction in the Faith. Herein is contained a very important lesson, which is this: that it is the will of God that man should be guided and taught by the ministry of his fellow-man. Hence the wholesome moral that no one must constitute himself his own guide, or expect the immediate direction of God, so long as he provides us with Spiritual Directors.

Proposition.—(1.) The need of a Spiritual Director, as shown from Scripture and the Fathers (i. n. 92 to the end of the Chapter); (2.) Proved by reason (ibid. from n. 100 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let no one presume to be his own guide in the way of salvation, but let every one submit himself humbly to the guidance of a prudent Director.

FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION OF OUR LADY.

HOW TO MEDITATE.

"*Maria autem conservabat omnia verba hæc, conferens in corde suo.*"—LUC. ij. 19.

Introduction.—Both after the Birth of her Divine Son, and after her Purification, when she heard the prophecy of Simeon and learnt that Her maternal heart was destined to be pierced by the sword of sorrow, Mary treasured these words within her breast, and continually pondered their deep significance, to teach us by her example how to meditate attentively on the eternal truths and mysteries of our holy faith. Let us then learn how to offer to God the sacrifice of mental prayer.

Proposition.—To meditate well we must observe certain conditions before and during our prayer. (1.) Conditions to be ob-

served before meditation (i. n. 164, and the entire Chapter). (2.) Conditions to be observed during the time of meditation (ibid. n. 173, and the entire Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must prepare our minds for prayer beforehand, and during it make a diligent use of the faculties of the soul, otherwise we cannot expect to reap the abundant fruits which may be gathered from the practice of mental prayer.

LADY-DAY.

OF THE UTILITY OF DEVOTION TO MARY.

"*Ave gratia plena.*"—LUC. i. 28.

Introduction.—The Immaculate Heart of Mary must indeed, even before she had conceived the Eternal Word in her chaste womb, have been overflowing with grace, since the Angel greets her with the title of "Full of grace." But from the moment that the Author of Grace dwelt within her, she became more than ever the privileged daughter of the Most High,—a fathomless ocean, as it were, of such superabundant grace, that men may draw from it all which they need for their salvation and sanctification without ever exhausting it.

Proposition.—Devotion to Mary is the sure road to solid virtue. (1.) It enriches the soul with every virtue (i. n. 457, and the entire Chapter). (2.) It averts or repels the attacks of our spiritual enemies (ibid. n. 462, and the entire Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us have recourse frequently and confidently to Mary, the Mother of Grace (ibid. nn. 487, 488).

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE WORSHIP TO BE PAID TO OUR LADY.

"*Benedicta tu in mulieribus.*"—LUC. i. 28.

Introduction.—The Angels themselves bow their heads and do homage to Mary, as to their sovereign Lady and Queen; and the

Evangelist St. Luke tells us that the Archangel greeted her with reverence, and some commentators think, that as he extolled her as blessed amongst women, he bent his knee before her. What then should we do, who so need her help that we cannot work out our salvation without it?

Proposition.—The worship of Mary comprises a negative and a positive homage. (1.) Negative homage (i. from n. 467 to n. 474). (2.) Positive homage (ibid. from n. 474 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us not be lukewarm or backward in our worship of Mary (i. the last paragraph).

FEAST OF ST. GEORGE, MARTYR.

WHY GOD ALLOWS US TO BE TEMPTED.

"*Et omnem, qui fert fructum, purgabit eum, ut fructum plus afferat.*"—JOAN. XV. 2.

Introduction.—Our infernal and implacable enemy resembles a roaring lion in his fury, and is for ever harassing us in one way or another with shameful and wicked temptations against faith, hope, and purity, &c. But we must not be discouraged, for, borne up by God's grace, we shall not only defeat the dragon of hell, as St. George did, but get good out of evil, by making capital of the temptations to which we are subjected.

Proposition.—God allows us to be tempted: (1.) For our humiliation (ij. nn. 381—383); (2.) To give us an occasion of acquiring merit (ibid. from n. 384 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us humble ourselves in the hour of temptation, but so far from losing heart, let us, on the contrary, carry on the combat with greater spirit and constancy.

FEAST OF SS. PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES.

OF THE PERNICIOUS EFFECTS OF SCRUPLES.

"*Non turbetur cor vestrum.*"—JOAN. xiv. 1.

Introduction.—The Gospel of to-day represents Jesus Christ calming the anxiety of the Apostles with the words: *Let not your hearts be troubled.* Now, there are many whose hearts, like those of the Apostles of old, are a prey to anxiety, trouble, and scruples, and who are tormented by imaginary fears of sin where there is no sin. To such we would address the same words of our Lord: *Let not your hearts be troubled;* for, troubles of this kind, apparently good and springing from a salutary fear of God, are not only utterly useless, but positively hurtful.

Proposition.—Scruples are hurtful to the soul: (1.) Because they render it powerless for good (ij. from n. 433 to n. 436); (2.) Because they extinguish hope (ibid. from n. 436 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Every effort must be made to get rid of scruples and to abide by the advice of a prudent Director. Certain particular forms of scruples may be here specified (ibid. the last Chapter).

FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

OF THE SENSE OF SMELL.

"*Formans me ex utero servum sibi.*"—ISAI. xlix. 5.

Introduction.—Sanctified in his mother's womb, St. John was a true servant of God from the moment that he saw the light, so much so indeed that, dead to the world and to the delights of the flesh, he lived for God alone. Hence he passed his youth in solitude and austerity, and spent his manhood in the practice of the most rigid penance, scarcely putting his lips to either food or drink, as Jesus Christ Himself testifies of His Precursor. In fact he made the sacrifice of his body, with all its senses, as a holocaust to God. Let us learn of him to mortify our senses, even the

sense of smell, which may seem to us to stand less in need of mortification than the four other senses.

Proposition.—We should mortify the sense of smell, albeit the least dangerous of the five senses: (1.) By depriving it of that which is pleasant (ij. nn. 181, 182); (2.) By forcing it to bear that which is disagreeable (ibid. nn. 183, 184).

Conclusion.—Let us endeavour to make of ourselves in all things a living, holy, and acceptable holocaust to God.

FEAST OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

OF CAUTION IN THE USE OF THE SENSE OF TOUCH.

"*Noli me tangere.*"—JOAN. XX. 17.

Introduction.—It may appear to us at first sight surprising that Jesus Christ, who had permitted Mary Magdalen, in the first moment of her conversion, to kiss and wash His sacred feet, and to wipe them with her hair, should have been unwilling to allow her to perform the same office of love after His Resurrection. Perhaps He wished to teach us that those who aspire to virtue, must be wary in the use of the sense of touch.

Proposition.—Caution in this respect is indispensable: (1.) Because negligence in the same is very dangerous (ij. nn. 12—15); (2.) Because such carelessness is displeasing to God (ibid. nn. 16—18).

Conclusion.—Whosoever values his chastity must keep the sense of touch under control, for if he does not, it will get the bit in its teeth, like a high-spirited horse, and run away with him, carrying him whither he would fain not go.

FEAST OF ST. JAMES, APOSTLE.

OF THE REMEDIES TO OPPOSE TO VAINGLORY.

"*Nescitis quid petatis.*"—MATTH. XX. 22.

Introduction.—Vainglory is a subtle poison indeed, for it worked its way into the hearts of those friends and disciples of Jesus Christ,

the two sons of Zebedee, who petitioned, in their ambition, for the first places in Heaven. And yet this same vainglory is but as a little smoke, which a puff of wind may dissipate. Indeed, Jesus Christ made answer to them : *You know not what you ask.* That we may prevent the venom from tainting our hearts, let us consider the preservatives against vainglory.

Proposition.—One very good remedy against this vice is to be found in prayer to God for light and a true knowledge of self. (1.) We must ask God for light (ij. nn. 319, 320). (2.) We must seek to know ourselves (ibid. n. 321 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Humble yourselves beneath the almighty hand of God, often beg His assistance, and strive to make progress in self-knowledge (ibid. n. 332).

THE SAME FEAST.

HOW TO MORTIFY THE PASSIONS.

"*Spectaculum facti sumus mundo et angelis et hominibus.*"—1 AD COR. iv. 9.

Introduction.—In the spectacle which we are become to the world, to angels, and to men, how much is there to offend the eyes of those who are the witnesses of our conduct, when, instead of the flowers of virtue, our souls grow nothing but the rank weeds of vice ! And all this because we fail to keep our unruly passions in due subjection. Let us consider by what means we may become a spectacle to the world, which men and angels shall delight to gaze upon.

Proposition.—We must be methodical in the mortification of our passions, and curb them on the very first signs of rebellion. (1.) There is a fixed method and order to follow in the mortification of the passions (ij. from n. 235 to n. 239). (2.) There is a way to resist their first attacks (ibid. from n. 239 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—The first thing to be done in this matter is to discover which is our predominant passion ; which done, we must proceed at once to thwart and cross it, even in things licit, on the least indication which it shows of a desire to have its own way (ibid. nn. 254—256).

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY.

HOW TO INCREASE DEVOTION TO MARY.

"*In plenitudine sanctorum detentio mea.*"—ECCLUS. xxiv. 16.

Introduction.—The ever-glorious Virgin Mary, whose Assumption into Heaven we commemorate this day, is enthroned high above the choirs of the Angels and of the Saints, who reverence her as their Sovereign Lady and Queen. Great power has been given to her by her Divine Son. She is able and willing to promote our salvation, and yet our trust in her is weak, we pay her little honour, and seldom have recourse to her,—because our love for Mary is cold, and because we do not esteem her as she deserves to be esteemed.

Proposition.—Esteem and love for Mary lead us to honour her. (1.) Esteem for Mary (i. nn. 478, 480). (2.) Love for Mary (ibid. nn. 479, 481, 482).

Conclusion.—We must often think of the high prerogatives of Mary, and of the love she bears us. This is the only way to obtain true devotion to her, without which, the attainment of solid virtue, nay, the gaining of life eternal, is out of the question.

THE SAME FEAST.

HOW TO WALK IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN THE MIDST OF THE WORLD.

"*Maria optimam partem elegit.*"—LUC. x. 42.

Introduction.—Not only did Mary Magdalen choose the better part when, seated at the feet of Jesus, she listened to the words which fell from His sacred Lips; but much more did Mary, the Mother of Jesus, do so, when she began in the presence of God to lead the life here on earth which she was afterwards to continue for ever in Heaven. Happy in our turn shall we be, if we please, if only like Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and like Mary Magdalen, we also make choice of the better part. Let us see how

amid the bustle and distractions of everyday life we may follow their example, and walk always in the presence of God.

Proposition.—The best means to maintain ourselves in the presence of God, in the midst of external occupations, are ejaculatory prayers, pious intentions and, above all, solitude. (1.) Ejaculatory prayers (i. nn. 295—298). (2.) A good intention (ibid. 299, 300, 304, 305.) (3.) Suitable retirement (ibid. nn. 300—302.)

Conclusion.—Whenever we are engaged in external occupations, we should strive to observe these practices faithfully, if we desire to keep ourselves always in the presence of God (ibid. n. 307).

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LADY.

OF THE USEFULNESS OF DEVOTION TO MARY.

"*De qua natus est Jesus qui vocatur Christus.*"—MATTH. i. 16.

Introduction.—Among the *Difficiles nugæ* of N. Paschasius of St. John, a Discalced Carmelite, we find the following line, which may be turned and twisted about in a variety of ways, without any alteration of the sense :—

"Tot tibi sunt dotes, Virgo, quot sidera cœlo."

Thou hast, O Virgin Lady, as many most beautiful prerogatives as there are stars in the sky; for as thy Divine Son, the Lord of lords, unto whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth, has adorned thy soul with all the most excellent virtues, and as He has made thee all-powerful, why should He not also have entrusted thee with the salvation of mankind? He has indeed done so; and authority and reason alike impose upon us the duty of paying the homage of faithful servants to the Blessed Virgin.

Proposition.—Devotion to Mary is, morally speaking, necessary to salvation. (1.) Proved from the testimony of authority (i. n. 445, and the whole Chapter). (2.) Proved from reason (ibid. n. 451, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let then these testimonies of the Holy Fathers be engraven in our hearts, together with the other arguments above adduced, and let us conceive such a sincere love of our Lady, that we may be able to call her our Mother, and attain through her to eternal happiness.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF WATCHFULNESS OVER THE EYES.

"*Audite disciplinam.*"—PROV. viij. 33.

Introduction.—How wonderful is the transcendent purity which shines forth in the spotless maiden whose birthday we are celebrating! How conspicuous was she for the most singular modesty, how pre-eminent in all virtue, and how full of grace! If we have a mind to share these graces with her and to deserve her protection, we must try to imitate her in the practice of every virtue, and of none more than the mortification of our eyes.

Proposition.—We must keep a strict guard over our eyes: (1.) On account of the dangers to which the sense of sight exposes us in this life (ij. from n. 127 to n. 132); (2.) Because particular graces are annexed to this watchfulness over the eyes (ibid. nn. 132, 135).

Conclusion.—That we may avoid sin and not be deprived, through our own fault, of particular graces, we have great need of caution in the use of our eyes.

FEAST OF ST. MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST.

OF CONTEMPT FOR THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD.

"*Et surgens secutus est eum.*"—MATTH. ix. 9.

Introduction.—St. Matthew began the work of his conversion by an act of heroism; for Publican as he was, and absorbed in

the pursuit of wealth, he rose up at the call of our Lord, left his money-bags on the spot, and followed his Divine Master without a moment's hesitation. How many are there amongst us who would follow Jesus Christ with the like promptitude, if they were not held back by love of the world and its goods. Let us strive to detach our hearts from the things of earth.

Proposition.—The total abandonment of the things of this world is the most excellent remedy against cupidity, because it obtains for us poverty of spirit; and we are all bound to make the sacrifice of at least a portion of our worldly substance. (1.) The total abandonment of riches is an excellent thing (ij. nn. 280—282). (2.) A partial sacrifice of them is absolutely necessary (ibid. from n. 283 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—He who wishes to put on the spirit of Jesus Christ, must put on poverty of spirit, and if he cannot strip himself of all his goods, he must at least sacrifice superfluities for the relief of the poor or for other good works.

FEAST OF SS. SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES.

OF INORDINATE FRIENDSHIPS.

"*Hæc mando vobis, ut diligatis invicem.*"—JOAN. xv. 7.

Introduction.—The love of our neighbour is the virtue which Jesus Christ has, in the most express terms, commanded us to practise, framing to that end *a new commandment*, and making this charity the distinguishing badge of His disciples and followers. But it is a virtue which has its limits, in so far that the love of our neighbour must have God for its foundation, and must not be carried to excess; for otherwise, instead of a help, it would prove an obstacle to salvation, and degenerate from a virtue into a vice.

Proposition.—Inordinate friendships are: (1.) Hurtful (ij. n. 348, and the whole Chapter); (2.) Very dangerous (ibid. n. 355, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—It is bad to give one's heart to the first comer,

for God reserves it for Himself, since He addresses each of us with the words: *Son, give Me thy heart.* Let us, on the contrary, detach our hearts from all creatures, and for this purpose use the means indicated (ij. n. 363, and the following).

THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS.

OF THE USEFULNESS OF PIOUS READING.

"*Salutant vos omnes sancti.*"—2 AD COR. xiij. 12.

Introduction.—Faith teaches us that there is in the Church of God a Communion of Saints. This is why we pay them honour, and give them an accidental glory. The Saints, in their turn, pray for us, offer up their merits in our behalf, and obtain graces for us. But more than all this, they send us their greetings from Heaven, and point out to us the road to our heavenly home.

Proposition.—The utility of Pious Reading demonstrated: (1.) By the authority of the Fathers (i. from n. 131 to n. 136); (2.) By the example of the Saints (ibid. nn. 137, 139, 140).

Conclusion.—We must make great account of pious reading; and parents and superiors discharge a most meritorious duty in instructing the young in letters and in the Science of the Saints.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE DESIRE OF PERFECTION.

"*Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam,*" &c.—MATTH. v. 6.

Introduction.—How great is the happiness of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the abode of every good without any admixture of evil, and where the blessed live together united in the bonds of never-ending peace and joy! We all long to be there; but to reach the goal we must hunger and thirst after justice, that is,

after solid virtue, for nothing else will satisfy the cravings of our immortal souls.

Proposition.—The desire of true piety is necessary to all: (1.) Not only to succeed in attaining to it (i. n. 43, and the entire Chapter; (2.) But even to obtain eternal salvation (ibid. n. 55, and the entire Chapter).

Conclusion.—He who would one day be a citizen of Heaven, must endeavour to attain to solid piety, and must avail himself of the means at his disposal. These may here be briefly enumerated.

FEAST OF ST. MARTIN, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR.

OF THE PARTICULAR EXAMINATION.

"*Si ergo corpus tuum totum lucidum fuerit.*"—Luc. xj. 34.

Introduction.—We shall indeed be happy if, at the hour of our death, we are able to say to the devil, as St. Martin did, "What are you doing here, cruel monster? You will find nothing in me belonging to you." If our body, that is our works, is all light, we shall be able to hold the same language; and nothing will contribute so much to this end, as the practice of the Particular Examination, by which we drag ourselves and our faults into the full light of the sun, so that nothing remains hidden in the dark. Let us consider the usefulness of this Examination, and learn how to perform it.

Proposition.—The Particular Examination is very useful, if pains are taken to make it well. (1.) Usefulness of the Particular Examination (i. nn. 377—379). (2.) How to make it (ibid. nn. 380—383).

Conclusion.—An exhortation to the use of the means indicated for the due performance of the Particular Examination (i. n. 388).

CHRISTMAS DAY.

OF THE VIRTUE OF DEVOTION.

"*Pie vivamus in hoc sæculo.*"—AD TITUM ij. 12.

Introduction.—To-day our dear Redeemer fills the world with joy, and sets us an example of every virtue,—humility, poverty, patience, &c. He comes to us in the guise of our Teacher and Master of true piety and real Devotion, and this shall form the subject of the present meditation.

Proposition.—True devotion is a ready will to devote one's self in all things which belong to the service of God. (1.) This is proved by the declarations of Holy Writ (iii. nn. 209, 210). (2.) By examples drawn from the same (nn. 211, 212).

Conclusion.—Let us strive with all our might to do joyfully and exactly all that the service of God requires of us, &c. Let us endeavour to imitate, as far as we are able, our newly-born Saviour, who has devoted Himself so fully to the service of His Father.

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.

OF THE LOVE OF OUR ENEMIES.

"*Domine, ne statuas illis hoc peccatum.*"—ACT. APOST. vij. 59.

Introduction.—St. Stephen had to suffer bitter injuries, calumnies, and a cruel death at the hands of his enemies, all which he not only bore with a wonderful patience, but following the example set him by his Divine Master, he even prayed for those who used him so cruelly. Now, the precept of Jesus Christ, and the example of this Saint, alike teach us the duty of forgiveness.

Proposition.—The love of our enemies makes us very like to our Heavenly Father, and to the Incarnate Word: (1.) To our Heavenly Father (iv. from n. 315 to n. 318); (2.) To the Word made Flesh (iv. from n. 318 to n 327).

Conclusion.—In order, therefore, to foster in our hearts this love of our enemies, let us often think of the mercy of our Heavenly Father and of the Incarnate Word for us, as set forth in volume iv., from n. 327; and let us endeavour to imitate St. Stephen, the Protomartyr of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE MEANS OF ACQUIRING DIVINE LOVE.

"*Quoties volui congregare filios tuos, quemadmodum gallina congregat pullos suos sub alas!*"—MATTH. xxiij. 37.

Introduction.—This text, like so many other passages of Holy Writ, proves to us how tender has been the love of Jesus Christ for us, and how slow we have been to make Him a return of love for love. Why are we so backward? No doubt because the fund of self-love laid up in our hearts, prevents us from considering the motives which should urge us to give back love for love. We must, therefore, try to rid ourselves of all obstacles, if we would acquire a noble and generous love of God, such as burned in the heart of St. Stephen.

Proposition.—To acquire divine love we must tear up self-love by the roots, and often meditate in fervent prayer upon the motives which should urge us to love. (1.) We must uproot self-love (iv., from n. 154 to n. 163); (2.) We must weigh the motives of charity (iv., from n. 163 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must, therefore, sound all the hidden depths of self-love, and do everything in our power to banish it from our hearts, that so we may acquire a love of God, as strong and as generous as the love of which St. Stephen sets us so noble an example.

FEAST OF ST. JOHN.

OF THE EXCELLENCE OF CHASTITY.

"*Discipulum, quem diligebat Jesus.*"—JOAN. xxj. 7.

Introduction.—What was the reason of the especially tender love which burned in the breast of Jesus Christ for the Apostle St. John? The reason, according to the Holy Fathers, is to be found in the singular innocence and chastity of the Virgin Disciple. So that, if we wish to please our Lord, we must give ourselves up, in a special manner, to the practice of the holy virtue of purity.

Proposition.—Chastity surpasses all the other moral virtues in excellence: because (1.) It makes us like the Saints (iii. nn. 395—399, and the following); (2.) It makes us like the Angels (iii. 400—404, and the following).

Conclusion.—If we yield to the fascination of this virtue, so full of charms, and if we spare no pains to acquire and perfect it in ourselves, we shall become like to the Angels and to the Saints, and share with St. John the privilege of being the favourites and bosom friends of Jesus Christ.

FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

OF THE CHIEF PRESERVATIVE OF CHASTITY.

"*Hi sunt qui cum mulieribus non sunt coinquinati.*"—APOCAL. xiv. 4.

Introduction.—In this text, and in other passages of his Apocalypse, St. John extols the virtue of Chastity, and declares that it merits a special reward. We cannot prize this virtue too highly, and as we carry it in frail vessels, we must guard the precious treasure with all possible care. Now, flight from danger is the most efficacious means of preserving chastity intact.

Proposition.—The principal means of preserving our chastity is

to avoid conversation with persons of the opposite sex. (1.) Because the Holy Fathers counsel this preservative (iii. nn. 413—417, and the following). (2.) Because right reason suggests the same (iii. nn. 418, 419, and the following).

Conclusion.—Since, therefore, precept and reason are at one in forbidding us the company of persons of the opposite sex, especially wherever there is undue familiarity, let us shun it as much as may be, in order that we may one day join the Holy Innocents in singing the canticle which it is given to pure souls only to sing.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE THREE DEGREES OF OBEDIENCE.

"*Surge et accipe puerum et matrem ejus, et fuge in Ægyptum.*"—MATTH. ij. 13.

Introduction.—A difficult command is here given to St. Joseph against which he might have raised very specious objections; but yet he obeys without demur, and God rewards his submission by protecting him in a most signal manner. If we would be protected by God, we must obey promptly and unreservedly.

Proposition.—Our obedience should be, (1.) Prompt (iii. nn. 294—298); (2.) Simple (iii. nn. 303—306); (3.) Cheerful (iii. from n. 312 to the end).

Conclusion.—As soon as the command of a Superior is made known to us, it is our duty to obey without delay, with alacrity, with simplicity, with joy, &c. Thus shall we imitate St. Joseph, and deserve the special protection of Divine Providence.

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY.

"*Ambulabunt gentes in lumine tuo.*"—ISA. lx. 3.

Introduction.—We are unspeakably blest, in that the bright star of Faith has shone in the eyes of the nations, and lighted up

the paths of our forefathers; a blessing for which we can never be sufficiently grateful to the divine mercy. But it is a still greater mercy that the peoples who have gone before us have walked by the beneficent light of this torch, and have handed it on to us. To render this benefit fruitful, we must always keep before our eyes the value and the necessity of faith.

Proposition.—Without the virtue of faith we cannot attain to eternal happiness, let alone solid virtue. (1.) Faith is necessary to salvation (iv. from n. 27 to n. 32). (2.) Faith is necessary to the acquisition of solid virtue (iv., from n. 32 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We must, above all, be firmly rooted in faith; for, without this solid foundation, the spiritual edifice falls to ruin. We must therefore never lose sight of the grounds of our belief, nor ever neglect any other means of increasing it, in order that the star of faith may always shine upon our path to guide our steps through life.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF THE ACTS OF RELIGION IN GENERAL.

"*Et procidentes adoraverunt eum.*"—MATTH. ij. 11.

Introduction.—The three Magi had no sooner beheld the newly-born Saviour, and acknowledged him to be both God and Man at one and the same time, than they did him homage, not only by internal acts of humility, but also by an outward worship. Following their example, we ought to worship God as our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier, by acts of internal and external adoration.

Proposition.—To the virtue of religion belong both outward and inward acts. (1.) Religion draws all its merits from the latter (iii. nn. 165, 166, and the following); (2.) but the former are equally obligatory (iii. nn. 168—171, and the following).

Conclusion.—Therefore let us, whenever we do homage to God, give the first place in our exercises of piety to the interior worship

of the heart, not to the exclusion, however, of the outward practices of religion, which go to nourish and foster devotion. Let it be our aim to imitate the three Magi.

EASTER MONDAY.

OF THE MOTIVES OF PATIENCE.

"*Nonne hæc oportuit pati Christum, et ita intrare in gloriam suam?*"—Luc. xxiv. 26.

Introduction.—The solemn Feast of our Lord's Resurrection displays to us the glory of Jesus Christ, that at the sight of it we may conceive a firm hope of our own resurrection. But it is only by bearing our share with Christ in His sufferings that we can expect to partake of His glory. High rewards are the crown of great efforts. Patience is therefore absolutely necessary.

Proposition.—A great recompense is promised to the patient soul, which here below cannot escape trial in one shape or in another. (1.) An infinite reward in the next world will crown the virtue of patience practised in this (iij. n. 353 and the following). (2.) Adversity is the portion of this life (ibid. n. 359 and the following).

Conclusion.—Whilst groaning under the weight of tribulation, we should not lose sight of the reward which awaits us in Heaven; and if at the same time we bear in mind that it is impossible to be altogether free from suffering, dejection will never find its way into our hearts.

THE SAME DAY.

HOW TO ACQUIRE A PERFECT FAITH.

"*O stulti, et tardi corde ad credendum in omnibus, quæ locuti sunt prophetæ.*"—Luc. xxiv. 25.

Introduction.—The reproach made by our Lord, new risen from the dead, to the disciples going to Emmaus, of folly and slowness

of belief, might perhaps, with greater reason, be addressed to us; for the life of sin we too often lead, contradicts the faith we profess. Whence comes this? We do not take the means to acquire a perfect faith.

Proposition.—We must not only frequently pray for the grace of a perfect faith, but also make frequent acts of this, as of every other, virtue. (1.) The duty of praying for the gift of faith (iv. n. 35). (2.) The duty of exercising ourselves in acts of faith, and of all the other virtues (ibid. n. 36 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—As faith is more necessary than any other virtue, we must not be satisfied with praying God to bestow it upon us, but go a step further, by making the principle of faith the rule of life and conduct.

EASTER TUESDAY.

OF CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD.

"*Ego sum, nolite timere.*"—LUC. xxiv. 36.

Introduction.—The lot of man is indeed miserable, for in the midst of the trials of this life, he is disquieted and affrighted more even than the Apostles were under the circumstances related in to-day's Gospel, in spite of the re-assurance given to all mankind as well as to the Apostles in the words: "It is I, fear not." Whence arises this fear? No doubt from the fact that we fail to see the hand of God in everything which befalls us, and that we keep our attention fixed merely upon secondary causes.

Proposition.—Since everything which happens to us, whether the effect of free or of necessary causes, comes from God, it is our duty to resign ourselves to the divine will. (1.) The effects of necessary causes are from God (iv. nn. 233—236). (2.) The same is to be said of free causes (ibid. from n. 236 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—To set our faces against even a single effect of either of these two sets of causes, is an act of folly and culpable ingratitude, since, on the one hand, everything is arranged by God

for the best and, on the other hand, there is no escape from crosses and suffering.

FEAST OF THE ASCENSION.

OF ZEAL, OR THE LOVE OF BENEVOLENCE.

"*Viri Galilæi, quid statis aspicientes in cœlum?*"—ACT. i. 11.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ, ascending to Heaven, carried with Him the loving hearts of His Apostles, who with difficulty tore themselves away from the spot where they had seen the last of their good Master. But our Lord was not satisfied with this barren love, and so He sent two angels to ask them why they stood there gazing up to Heaven? as though He would have said, If you really love Me, go and work for the advancement of My glory. For all love which deserves the name, is an active love. Let us, then, animate ourselves to labour for the sanctification of our souls, by the zealous practice of good works.

Proposition.—The Love of Benevolence towards God, makes us zealous for the salvation of our neighbour. (1.) This virtue causes us to labour in promoting God's glory (iv. nn. 189—194) (2.) It incites to labour zealously for this end (ibid. from n. 195 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—All those who are responsible for the salvation of souls, would do well to develop in their hearts this Love of Benevolence, for it will lead them to the faithful performance of their duty in this respect. Nay, we all of us need to be penetrated with this love, since, to each and all of us, God has, in a greater or less degree, confided the charge of our brethren.

THE SAME FEAST.

OF FULFILLING THE WILL OF GOD.

"*Non est vestrum nosse tempora vel momenta, quæ Pater posuit in sua potestate.*"—ACT. i. 7.

Introduction.—Man is tempted to the desire of penetrating by indiscreet research into the hidden mysteries of God's Providence; as well by a certain spirit of curiosity inherent in human nature, as by an unruly craving for the power to fashion all things to his will and fancy. Hence it was that our Lord administered the rebuke to the Apostles, "*Non est vestrum nosse*," &c., teaching them thereby, that to gratify such an unlawful curiosity as this, is to trespass upon the indefeasible rights of God Himself. Let us apply the lesson to ourselves.

Proposition.—God has an infinite right, as our Creator and Redeemer, to all our actions. This right belongs to Him, (1.) as our Creator (iv. nn. 241—245); (2.) as our Redeemer (ibid. from n. 245 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—To oppose the will of God, even in trifles, is to be guilty of an injustice to the Almighty. Let us, therefore, constantly humble ourselves beneath the all-powerful hand of God, by submitting our will to His in the most painful trials which can befall us.

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

HOW TO BE HAPPY IN THIS LIFE.

"*Ego veni ut vitam habeant, et abundantius habeant.*"—JOAN. x. 10.

Introduction.—Unspeakably great is the goodness of God, Who, not content with giving us His own only-begotten Son, has also sent down upon us the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Source of life and of every happiness in this world and in the next. How are we to secure this happiness? By conforming our wills to the will of God.

Proposition.—Our happiness in this life is to be found in Conformity to the Will of God. (1.) Our happiness consists in the gratification of our desires (iv. nn. 266—268, and nn. 273—286). This happiness is secured for us by conformity to the will of God (ibid. from n. 268 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Whoever wishes to be happy in this world, must place himself in the hands of God, firmly believing that the troubles, great and small, which overtake us, are designed by Providence for our good (iv. n. 286, and the following).

FEAST OF ST ANDREW.

TRUE DEVOTION.

"*Et vocavit eos.*"—MATTH. x. 1.

Introduction.—The vocation of St. Andrew was made up of sweets and bitters, of consolations and trials; consolations in the society of his Divine Master, in the success of his apostolic mission, and in the sweet practice of prayer; trials in the bitterness of persecution, and in the torments of a cruel death. It is thus God deals with our souls in prayer, now filling them with sweet comfort, and then again leaving them a prey to dryness and desolation.

Proposition.—Devotion, in its essence at least, is necessary for all who aspire to perfection; and sensible devotion, which is only accidental, is also useful. (1.) Substantial devotion is indispensable (iij. 228—230). (2.) Sensible, or Accidental devotion is useful (ibid. 231—234).

Conclusion.—He, therefore, who is earnestly desirous of attaining to perfection, must apply himself unceasingly to the practice of true and solid devotion.

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF OUR LADY.

THE NATURE OF CHASTITY.

"Qui vigilat ad fores meas quotidie, et observat ad postes ostii mei."—PROVERB. viij. 34.

Introduction.—If, as faithful servants, we keep watch at the gates of our Lady, and are ever on the alert at our post, that is to say, if we meditate attentively upon her life and virtues, we shall find in her an admirable model of most perfect purity. Admiration begets imitation; and in this particular instance, there is the greater inducement to walk in the footsteps of Mary, because she bestows her favours with a more lavish hand upon such as strive to imitate her in the practice of the virtue of chastity.

Proposition.—The virtue of chastity holds in check our sensual appetites, enabling us to avoid, not only every act of the opposite vice, but also every lustful thought. Chastity is threefold. (1.) Of the essence of chastity (iij. nn. 387—389). (2.) Of the three kinds of chastity (ibid. nn. 390—394).

Conclusion.—It is the duty of each of us to practise in its perfection the particular degree of chastity proper to our state of life; and if we have but good will we may count upon the protection and assistance of the Immaculate Virgin.

FEAST OF ST. THOMAS, APOSTLE.

THE PRACTICE OF FRATERNAL CORRECTION.

"Noli esse incredulus, sed fidelis."—JOAN. xx. 27.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ, the perfect model of every virtue, has set us an example of the manner in which we should practise the virtue of Fraternal Correction. With some, He was gentleness itself; to others, and especially to those who profaned the Temple, He displayed the greatest severity. In the Gospel of this day, we have an instance of the method our Lord followed in

administering a rebuke, when He reproved St. Thomas for His unbelief.

Proposition.—Fraternal correction should be sometimes gentle, sometimes severe. (1.) How to administer reproof with mildness (iv. nn. 368—372). (2.) How to administer correction with severity (ibid. nn. 373 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Since God has given each of us the charge of his brother, and has threatened to call to a strict account those upon whom this duty more especially devolves from their position, all men, but Superiors more than all others, are bound to consider seriously, which of these two methods of correction they should employ according to circumstances.

THE SAME FEAST.

FRATERNAL CORRECTION.

"Noli esse incredulus, sed fidelis."—JOAN. xx. 27.

Introduction.—It is not uncommon to meet with persons who, full of solicitude for their own salvation, care little or nothing for that of their neighbour, utterly regardless of our Saviour's command: "If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him between thee and him alone," and forgetful of Christ's example in this matter, Who sought to bring back, not St. Thomas alone, but all strayed sheep, wearying Himself with fatigue in His search after them.

Proposition.—Fraternal correction is the duty of all, but especially of Superiors. (1.) The general obligation (iv. nn. 64—66). (2.) The special obligation (ibid. n. 67).

Conclusion.—It is especially incumbent upon Superiors to examine whether they be guilty of omission in the discharge of this duty of fraternal correction; and on the discovery of their shortcomings they must purpose amendment, and study the manner in which they should acquit themselves of their obligation, whether by mildness or severity of rebuke, so as not only to win

back their erring brethren, but also to earn for themselves an eternal reward.

THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL.

THE USEFULNESS OF CONFORMITY TO THE DIVINE WILL.

"*Domine, quid me vis facere?*"—ACT. ix. 6.

Introduction.—St. Paul had no sooner lost the outward sense of sight, than the eyes of his soul were opened, and he exclaimed, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" He becomes once and for ever entirely conformed to the will of God, ready to submit to the severest trials it may be the divine pleasure to send him. If a ray of that same light which shone around Paul were to illumine our souls, how easy and even sweet would the crosses of this life appear to us!

Proposition.—There is nothing so advantageous as submission to the will of God, even in adversity (iv. n. 253, and the whole Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us endeavour never to allow any kind of reverse to rob us of this precious virtue, under the conviction that God arranges all things for the best. Then shall we be like the Apostle, invincible.

CANDLEMAS DAY.

SACRIFICE, THE CHIEF ACT OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

"*Placebit Domino sacrificium Juda et Jerusalem.*"—MALACH. iij. 4.

Introduction.—The most august Sacrifice ever offered in the Temple of Jerusalem, was undoubtedly that in which the Virgin Mother presented her Divine Son to the Eternal Father. Hence it is that the sacrifice of Juda and of Jerusalem is said to have been sovereignly acceptable to the Lord. Now, as it is our duty also to offer sacrifice to God, in acknowledgment of His supreme dominion over all things, it behoves us to consider the conditions

which we must fulfil, in order that our offering may find favour in the sight of God.

Proposition.—Sacrifice is the highest act of religious worship which we can pay to God. (1.) It is offered to Him in acknowledgment of His sovereign dominion (iii. nn. 182—186). (2.) It is deserving of all our esteem and veneration (ibid. nn. 187—189).

Conclusion.—Let us conceive a great esteem of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and endeavour to assist at it as often as we can, with all possible devotion and reverence.

FEAST OF ST. MATTHIAS, APOSTLE.

THE NECESSITY OF JUSTICE.

"*Et hic possedit agrum de mercede iniquitatis.*"—ACT. i. 18.

Introduction.—The traitor Judas, whose place in the College of the Apostles was afterwards filled by St. Matthias, fell because of his injustice, and forfeited life eternal together with the life of the body. Injustice is the plague of the human race; its reign is so wide-spread that it is a source of misery and vexation all over the world.

Proposition.—Justice is of such importance to mankind that without it there can be no happiness. (1.) Without justice all is confusion (iii. n. 60). (2.) Where justice reigns, there is true peace (ibid. nn. 56—58).

Conclusion.—A brief recapitulation of what has been said on this subject, with an exhortation to seek justice and shun whatever is opposed to it.

THE SAME FEAST.

THE EXCELLENCE OF MEEKNESS.

"*Discite a me quia mitis sum et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris.*"—MATTH. xj. 29.

Introduction.—No man is free from troubles of mind and heart

As every one desires happiness, so does he seek to obtain quiet of mind, which is indispensable to happiness. How comes it, then, that so few really enjoy imperturbable peace of soul? It is because so few are solicitous to walk in the footsteps of our Saviour, and to put into practice the advice which He has given us on the subject of meekness.

Proposition.—Meekness is a most excellent virtue: (1.) Because it soothes the irritation of our enemies (iii. nn. 469—473); (2.) Because it alone can produce this effect (ibid. nn. 474, 475).

Conclusion.—He who would calm the anger of his enemy, must use the weapon of meekness.

FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

"*Joseph autem vir ejus cum esset justus.*"—MATTH. i. 19.

Introduction.—The husband of the Virgin Mary, full of justice, and consequently of all holiness, the beloved of God and man, is held up to our veneration to-day, not only because he is a powerful protector to us in all our needs, and more especially at the hour of death, but much more because he is a model of every virtue. How burning was his love of God by reason of his intimate relations with the Son of God! Let us examine, therefore, the nature of the love of God, in order that we may be enabled to imitate St. Joseph in this respect.

Proposition.—Although perfect charity loves God for His own sake, it does not on that account exclude the motives of self-interest. (1.) Charity causes us to love God for His own sake (iv. nn. 135—139). (2.) It does not exclude the motive of personal gain (ibid. nn. 140 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—We are therefore bound to love God with our whole heart, but we must at the same time cherish the hope of an eternal reward, in order to please Him by alternate acts of love and hope, and thus to secure the great affair of our salvation.

THE SAME FEAST.

HINTS UPON TRUE DEVOTION

"*Voluit occulte dimittere eam.*"—MATTH. i. 19.

Introduction.—There are many very marked vicissitudes in the life of St. Joseph. His espousals with the Virgin Mary, the angelic message mentioned in to-day's Gospel, and the coming of the Magi to the crib of Bethlehem, fill his soul with joy. At another time, sadness, fear, and grief assail his heart, as when that cruel suspicion of the fidelity of his spotless Spouse haunted his soul, or when again he was bidden to arise at night and to flee into Egypt. If this intimate friend of God, the nursing father of the Son of God, was subject to such bitter trials, how can we dare to claim exemption from them?

Proposition.—We must receive the gift of consolation or suffer its withdrawal with equanimity, for: (1.) Attachment to sensible consolation is hurtful to perfection (iii. nn. 233, 234, and nn. 239—241); (2.) The withdrawal of consolation is beneficial to perfection (ibid. nn. 235—238).

Conclusion.—If in our devout exercises we are deprived of sensible comfort, we must not lose heart nor be troubled, because spiritual consolations are not necessary for the attainment of perfection, provided we are really earnest in our endeavours to practise solid virtue.

FEAST OF ST. GEORGE, MARTYR.

OBSTACLES TO DEVOTION.

"*Si quis in me non manserit, mittetur foras sicut palmes, et arescet.*"—JOAN. xv. 6.

Introduction.—The Lord is a jealous God, Who brooks no rival, Who demands our whole heart, or He will have none of it. He will not reign in a heart except as its sole Monarch. Hence it is not surprising that the soul of a man who is attached to the

things of earth, should be dried up and never feel any movement of piety, even as the branch withers away when it has been lopped from the parent tree.

Proposition.—There are two obstacles in the way of true devotion: (1.) A sordid affection to the things of earth (iii. nn. 242—244); (2.) An excessive anxiety about worldly affairs, which troubles the mind (ibid. nn. 245—253).

Conclusion.—May be suggested by the two considerations comprised in nn. 248, 249.

FEAST OF SS. PHILIP AND JAMES.

THE ROAD OF PERFECTION.

"*Quo ego vado scitis, et viam scitis.*"—JOAN. xiv. 4.

Introduction.—We all know whither we are bound, namely, to our heavenly country, and we know the road which leads to it, namely, purity of manners and holiness of life; but yet there are comparatively few who walk the path of sanctity and enter heaven by the narrow gate.

Proposition.—The attainment of perfection depends in great measure upon our knowledge of the conditions required for perfection. (1.) The conditions requisite for perfection (iv. nn. 387—388). (2.) How to make ourselves familiar with, and how to fulfil them (ibid. n. 389, to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Whoever would attain to solid virtue must labour to uproot from his heart every vice, and to plant in it every virtue. This must form the one great purpose of his life, so that after death he may appear before his judge laden with a rich store of merit.

FEAST OF SS. PETER AND PAUL.

THE PERFECTION OF CHARITY.

"*Pasce oves meas.*"—JOAN. xxj. 17.

Introduction.—These two Princes of the Apostolic College lived, toiled, and died for the spreading of Christ's Kingdom upon earth, and for the salvation of mankind. They bore hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness; they traversed whole continents, amidst painful sufferings and bitter persecutions, sowing, as they passed, the seed of the word of God, and watering it with their blood. For none knew so well as they, that the proof of perfect charity is a burning zeal for the salvation of souls.

Proposition.—The most perfect love of God consists in procuring the salvation of souls (iv. nn. 378—380).

Conclusion.—Whoever would pretend to real love for Jesus Christ must be zealous for the salvation of his neighbour; and although it is not every one who is called upon by his position or charge to fulfil this duty, still every one is bound to do something in this respect, according to his opportunities, by reproving those who go astray, by instructing the ignorant—especially if these be in any way his own subjects—or by procuring instruction for such as he cannot instruct in person.

THE SAME FEAST.

ZEAL FOR SOULS.

"*Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi.*"—MATTH. xvj. 16.

Introduction.—That which Peter confesses in the Gospel of this festival, he afterwards preached in the company of his colleague St. Paul, all over the world; and by his preaching of the word of God, as with a finely tempered sword, he beat down the opposition of hell and idolatry, and converted the world to the faith of Jesus Christ. Then, by the administration of the sacraments, he established the hearts of men so firmly in the faith, that the sharpest torments failed to separate them from the love of God.

What virtue, therefore, and efficacy must there not be in the word of God, and in the sacraments! If we have at heart our own and our neighbour's salvation, we also shall adopt these two great means to procure the one and the other.

Proposition.—The salvation of souls is obtained chiefly by the word of God and by the sacraments: (1.) By the word of God (iv. nn. 381—385); (2.) By the administration of the sacraments (ibid. n. 386).

Conclusion.—Let us so prepare our souls for reception of the word of God that it may bear plentiful fruit in them, and let us often go to drink at the saving springs of the sacraments; thus we may rest assured of winning the victory over our spiritual enemies and of becoming so fixedly rooted in good, that neither death nor life, neither prosperity nor adversity, will ever be able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ.

FEAST OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

THE LOVE OF SORROW, OR CONTRITION.

"*Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum.*"—Luc. vij. 47.

Introduction.—St. Mary Magdalen is the great model of penitents, not only because at the very outset of her conversion she trampled human respect under foot, when, heedless of the eyes which were turned upon her, she entered the banqueting-hall; but also because, after having received from the sacred lips of our Saviour the assurances of His forgiveness, she nevertheless did not cease, for the remainder of her life, to bewail her sins. Let us learn, from her example, the practice of compunction.

Proposition.—Contrition, or the Love of Sorrow, should reign in our heart through life, because this virtue is most profitable to our souls. (1.) We must be penetrated with contrition all our life long (iv. nn. 204—207). (2.) Contrition is most useful to our souls (ibid. nn. 208, 209).

Conclusion.—Let us often elicit acts of this love, keeping the motives of contrition constantly before our eyes, and we shall

thereby not only be cleansed from our sins, but at the same time shall be amassing such a store of merit from this practice, as one day to be partakers with St. Mary Magdalen in her heavenly triumph.

FEAST OF ST. LAURENCE, MARTYR.

THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY.

"*Dispersit, dedit pauperibus, justitia ejus manet in sæculum sæculi.*"
PSAL. cxj. 8, et II. AD COR. ix. 9.

Introduction.—In the Epistle of this day, St. Paul teaches us the excellence of almsgiving, and of the other Corporal Works of Mercy. Thus, he speaks of the harvest which we are to reap, and he tells us that "he who soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly," and that "good deeds are to be done not with sadness, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." St. Laurence carried out this lesson of the Apostle to the letter, in his distribution of the treasures of the Church to the poor of Christ; and this, therefore, shall be the subject of our present meditation.

Proposition.—The corporal works of mercy are not only the fulfilment of a divine command, they are also a source of merit. (1.) They are the object of a precept (iv. nn. 340—342). (2.) They are very meritorious (ibid. from n. 343 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us devote ourselves as far as we can to the works of mercy, thus laying up treasures for heaven, that our justice, like that of the glorious martyr St. Laurence, may abide for ever.

THE SAME FEAST.

APPRECIATIVE LOVE.

"*Si quis mihi ministraverit, honorificabit eum Pater meus.*"—JOAN. xij. 26.

Introduction.—St. Laurence served God faithfully by fulfilling all his duties as a Deacon of the Church, not only with exactness, but also from a motive of most tender love, which bound him so closely to his Divine Master that blandishments, threats, and the cruel gridiron were powerless to separate him from God. It was by this love that he obtained the crown of glory bestowed upon him by the Eternal Father. In order that we may catch some spark of the love which burned in the breast of St. Laurence, we will consider the nature of Appreciative Love.

Proposition.—The appreciative love of God is of a higher order than sensible love, or the love of the affections. (1.) The difference between these two loves established (iv. nn. 180—184). (2.) For what reason and to what degree appreciative love claims our preference (ibid. n. 185 to the end of the Chapter).

Conclusion.—Let us at least desire to possess this love of appreciation; not only is it possible of attainment, but it is also necessary and fraught with advantage to all.

FEAST OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE.

GREAT EXAMPLES OF THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE.

"*Vos estis corpus Christi.*"—I. AD COR. xij. 27.

Introduction.—Since we all make up the Mystic Body of Christ, and are His members, we must all be crucified with Him, and bear suffering patiently as He did, that we may also be glorified with Him. St. Bartholomew has set us a noble example in this respect, crowning the sufferings of a laborious life with a cruel martyrdom. Now, as nothing encourages us so much as the example of others,

we should help our weakness by considering the model of Patience left us by the saints.

Proposition.—The Saints, who have been tried in the furnace of tribulation, teach us the practice of patience (iij. nn. 361—374).

Conclusion.—If we desire to practise the virtue of patience under the trials to which we are subject, we must always keep in view the noble example set us by the Saints.

THE SAME FEAST.

ESSENTIAL AND ACCIDENTAL DEVOTION.

"*Æmulamini charismata meliora.*"—I. Ad Cor. xij. 31.

Introduction.—Some divine gifts and graces are of greater price than the others, and amongst the most precious is to be reckoned the gift of true Devotion, in which we must carefully distinguish two things: First, that which is essential to the virtue, namely, a readiness of the will in the service of God: Secondly, what is accidental to devotion, that is to say, the affections which accompany it.

Proposition.—Substantial is preferable to accidental devotion. (1.) In what the substance of devotion consists (iij. nn. 224, 225). (2.) What is accidental to it (ibid. nn. 226, 227).

Conclusion.—It is absolutely necessary for acquiring and preserving the virtue of solid devotion, to adopt every means in our power, and to put forth all the energies of our mind and heart.

FEAST OF ST. MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST.

THE PRESERVATIVES OF CHASTITY.

"*Mulier innupta et virgo, cogitat quæ Domini sunt.*"—I. Ad Cor. vij. 34.

Introduction.—So great are the prerogatives of Chastity, that even the eloquence of the Apostle of the Gentiles can scarcely

find words in which to describe them, and St. Matthew esteemed this virtue so highly as to engage Iphigenia, the daughter of the King of Ethiopia, to vow her virginity to God, which, according to the legend, was the cause of his own martyrdom. But as we carry this treasure in frail vessels, we must expect to lose it, unless we take very great care of it, and use every possible precaution.

Proposition.—Chastity is preserved by two principal means: (1.) By the chastisement of the body (iij. nn. 428, 430); and (2.) By humble prayer (ibid. nn. 431—437).

Conclusion.—If we would triumph over the vice opposed to purity, we must shun everything which flatters the body and its senses; more than this, full of distrust of our own strength, we must have constant recourse to the powerful weapon of prayer.

FEAST OF ST. MICHAEL, ARCHANGEL.

HOW TO ACQUIRE THE VIRTUE OF FORTITUDE.

"*Michael . . . . pugnabat cum dracone.*"—Apoc. xij. 7.

Introduction.—The great leader of the heavenly hosts, St. Michael, who hurled Lucifer and his rebel angels down from heaven, will also stand by our side and drive the hellish foes from us at the hour of death, if we do homage to him as the patron and protector of the dying. But if we desire to obtain the gift of fortitude at our last hour through the intercession of St. Michael, we must endeavour to practise this fortitude whilst still in the vigour of life and health, and employ every means to attain to the virtue of fortitude.

Proposition.—There are three ways by which we may obtain this virtue: (1.) We must earnestly pray to God for it (iij. nn. 108, 115, and the following); (2.) We must prepare for more terrible trials by the patient endurance of lesser evils (ibid. nn. 109—111); (3.) We must frequently meditate upon the fortitude with which Jesus Christ met torments and death (ibid. nn. 112, 113, &c.).

Conclusion.—These three means, but especially meditation

upon our Saviour's fortitude in the agony of the Passion, are necessary to enable us to bear up against our daily trials, and to fight the last combat of life successfully.

THE SAME FEAST.

THE SOURCES OF DEVOTION.

"*Beatus qui legit et audit.*"—APOC. i. 3.

Introduction.—If we knew how to read the word of God with relish, we should be happy indeed, and even like the angels who, beholding God face to face, are filled to overflowing with unutterable joy. How comes it that we lack this grace and happiness? No doubt because we know not where to find the springs of devotion.

Proposition.—Besides God, Who is the source of every good, there are two principal sources of devotion: (1.) The one proximate, which is the love of God (iij. nn. 214—221); (2.) The other remote, which is a low opinion of self (ibid. n. 222, and the following).

Conclusion.—Let us do all we can, with the help of grace, to obtain a burning love of God and a profound humility, by frequent meditation in the depths of our heart upon the benefits which God has so lavishly bestowed on us.

FEAST OF SS. SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES.

HOW TO ACQUIRE THE VIRTUE OF JUSTICE.

"*Hæc mando vobis, ut diligatis invicem.*"—JOAN. xv. 17.

Introduction.—The virtue of charity to our neighbour, so often inculcated by our Lord, must always go hand in hand with Justice; for how can he pretend to love his neighbour who tramples upon his neighbour's rights? Therefore, to keep the commandment of charity, we must first be possessed of justice.

Proposition.—Justice is acquired in two ways: (1) By preserving the heart free from covetousness (iij. nn. 63—65); (2.) By rigorous self-examination on the faults committed against justice, and by carefully avoiding them (ibid. nn. 67—71).

Conclusion.—Every one must familiarise himself with the use of this twofold means, and be careful not to fail in respect of justice, for otherwise the practice of charity is out of the question.

FEAST OF ST. MARTIN, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR.

HOW TO ACQUIRE MEEKNESS.

"*Memento, Domine, David, et omnis mansuetudinis ejus.*"—PSAL. CXXXJ. 1.

Introduction.—The meekness peculiar to King David, which the Church in the office of to-day attributes to St. Martin, was a marked feature in the character of this saint; and in particular, this meekness was conspicuous in his bearing towards one Bricius, first the Saint's persecutor, and afterwards his successor in the see of Tours. St. Martin used to say, "Jesus Christ bore with Judas, and shall I not put up with Bricius?"

Proposition.—There are two ways of overcoming anger and of acquiring meekness: (1.) By conjuring up before the mind every possible affront we may have to bear (iij. nn. 476—478); (2.) When we notice the failings of others, to think of our own sins (ibid. nn. 479—481, &c.)

Conclusion.—Let us often call to mind the injuries which may be inflicted upon us, and at the same time reflect upon the faults into which we have fallen, that we may be enabled to bear wrongs meekly; if we are in earnest in this, we cannot fail to attain to the virtue of meekness.

The Vicar-Apostolic of Bois-le-Duc, where the Latin translation was printed to which these Skeleton Sermons were appended, subjoined to his approval the remark that Scaramelli's work was

written to be studied and meditated, not to furnish matter of public preaching. He approved of the idea of these sketches of discourses, but warns preachers not to embody in their sermons certain of the moral examples or legends contained in the book; for many of them are unauthenticated, while others are told in a manner unbefitting the dignity of the pulpit. He justly remarks that the word of the preacher must be altogether blameless. *Verbum nostrum sanum et irreprehensibile.*

B. DE[illegible]
[illegible]WARDEN.

DEINIOL'S LIBRARY

INDEX.

Abarius, Monk, heroic humility of, iii. 543.
Abimelech a pattern to his soldiers, ii. 148; type of Christ, iii. 348.
Abraham, an example of rejecting distractions in prayer, i. 186; tried by affliction, iii. 334; his meekness, iii. 468; his simple faith, iv. 19, 20; an example of firm hope, iv. 86.
Abram, Monk, conversion effected by, through gentleness, iv. 371, 372.
Absalom, David's love for, i. 469.
Absolution, practice of withholding, i. 337.
Abstinence, a kind of Sacrifice, iii. 190.
Adam, punishment of, not excessive, iv. 243.
Adoration at the beginning of meditation, i. 169; an act of religion, iii. 174.
Advance in perfection always possible, i. 61; constantly necessary, i. 66-86; is impeded by looking back, i. 71.
Advent, First Sunday of, iv. 269, 311; Second Sunday of, iv. 270, 311; Third Sunday of, iv. 270, 312; Fourth Sunday of, iv. 270, 513.
Adversity, the best medicine for the soul, iii. 339, *ff.*; examples of the good effects of, iii. 340; examples of, in Saints of the Old Law, iii. 344; a proof of God's love, iii. 345, 346, 379.
Affection for kindred, ii. 342, *sq.*
Affections the result of meditation, i. 174.
Affliction, causes of, twofold, iv. 240; are sent for our temporal advantage, iv. 256; are sent for our spiritual welfare, iv. 257, 258; their advantage considered in Dives and Lazarus, iv. 263.
Afflictions. *See* SUFFERING.
Agatho, Abbot, his esteem for the virtue of faith, iv. 31.
Agesilaus, fortitude of, iii. 336.
Alacrity in believing, an ornament of faith, iv. 26.
Albertus Magnus; why the smell is more acute in brutes than in men, ii. 181.
Alexander the Great, anecdote of, related by St. Augustine, iii. 61.
Almsdeeds, a kind of Sacrifice, iii. 190; not meritorious apart from obedience, iii. 289; fruitless without charity, iv. 145; prove our brotherly love, iv. 339-341; how much insisted on in Scripture, iv. 341; miraculously rewarded, iv. 342, 343; a test of charity, iv. 344; are given to Christ Himself, iv. 344-346; practised by the Saints, iv. 350, 352; include the corporal works of mercy, iv. 351, 353; obtain pardon of sin, iv. 355; rewarded by temporal blessings, iv. 356.
Almsgiver, his resemblance to God, iv. 349.
Aloysius, St., his penitential life, ii. 39, 40; his penance on his death-bed, ii. 46; his heroic self-denial, ii. 256; his mortification of sight, iii 153.
Alphonsus I. of Portugal, his vision before battle, iv. 45.
Altars, of burnt-offerings and incense, ii. 228; are dedicated to God alone, iii. 185.
Alypius, the friend of St. Augustine, experienced the evil of want of custody of eyes, ii. 125.
Ambition, ii. 297, &c.; sin of, ii. 300; how opposed to perfection, ii. 303, &c.; remedies against, ii. 319, *sq.*, 326, *sq.*
Ambrose, St., on the first step to perfection, i. 75; his charity with sinners, i. 351; on daily Communion, i. 422; his sense of the importance of modesty, ii. 139, *sq.*; modesty in conversation, ii. 142; on the modesty of Our Lady, ii. 149; on ambition, ii. 303; on the advantage of temptation, ii. 387; on wariness in speaking, iii. 13; shows that justice cannot exist without prudence, iii. 24; on the excellence of justice, iii. 53; on true fortitude, iii. 100; on the utility of foreseeing trials, iii. 109; insisted on silence during Mass, iii. 206; on the various species of chastity, iii. 391; records heroic chastity of a youth, iii. 402; teaches that humility is necessary to acquire and preserve chastity, iii. 432; on the virtue of meekness, iii. 444; on false and true humility, iii. 548; compares an angry man to a bell, iv. 332; enjoins silence during insult, iv. 332; on love of our enemies, iv. 338; on fraternal correction, iv. 370.
Ananias, Director to St. Paul, i. 97.
Andrew the Apostle, St., Feast of, iv. 342.
Andreysia, St., her love of chastity, iii. 402.
Angela of Foligno, Blessed, beginning of her perfection, i. 76.
Angels, guardian, watch how we pray, i. 201.
Angels assist us in resisting the devil, ii. 373, *ff.*; their reverence for Mass, iii. 164; happy because they fulfil the will of God, iv. 272.
Anger, cured by Confession, i. 314; lowers man to the level of the brutes, iii. 410; upsets reason, iii. 451; distorts the outward

form, iii. 452; description of a man in, iii. 452, 453; example of, iii. 454; a hindrance to prayer, iii. 463, 464; disarmed by meekness, iii. 479, 474, 475; softened by foresight of insults, iii. 476; how it may be weakened, iii. 476; quieted by thought of our sinfulness, iii. 477; by thought of our own weakness, iii. 479; if reasonable not opposed to meekness, iii. 483; when opposed to reason, iii. 486; should be free from resentment, iii. 488; apart from reason to be avoided, iii. 492; at sins of others not sinful, iii. 494.
Anna, wife of Elcana, obtained patience by prayer, iii. 382; and offspring, iii. 382.
Anselm, St., on devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 448.
Ant, the, an example of prudence, iii. 22.
Anthropomorphism, i. 168.
Antiochus, his false prudence, iii. 21.
Antoninus, St., anecdote related by, concerning the vice of impurity, iii. 134.
Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, reported to the senate a victory gained by the prayer of a Christian legion, iii. 201.
Antony, St., maxim of, i. 68; on renewal of spirit, i. 70; how he trained Paul the Simple, i. 102; his trust in God, ii. 402, *cf.*; how he was cured of scruples, ii. 459; explains why prudence is the most necessary of all the virtues, iii. 27; his assiduity in prayer, iii. 204; records the humility of a poor man, iii. 532; his vision concerning humility, iii. 558; his dying exhortation to his monks, iv. 38; his zeal against the Arians, iv. 198.
Anxiety a hindrance to devotion, iii. 251.
Aphrantes, a Solitary, his zeal, iv. 199.
Apostasy on eve of martyrdom, i. 21; caused by gluttony, ii. 86.
Apostles, gave up much because they gave up all, ii. 274; vowed poverty, ii. 282; models of ready and joyful obedience, iii. 311; their joy in tribulation, iii. 378.
Appetite, sensitive, i. 340; sensual, its objects, iii. 125.
Appreciative love of God, explanation of, iv. 179, *ff.*; how distinguished from sensible, iv. 180; illustrated in Sir Thomas More, iv. 183; can rise to higher degrees of perfection, iv. 185; degrees of, iv. 185.
Archytas, of Tarentum, beautiful reply of, when in anger, iii. 491.
Aridity and tepidity distinguished, i. 83.
Aridity often arises from vanity, i. 85; does not hinder the fruit of meditation, i. 187; practical hints on, i. 204, *sq.*; conduct during, i. 210.
Aridity. *See* Dryness.
Aristides, meekness of, iv. 331.
Aristotle, his definition of prudence, iii. 10; his analysis of prudence, iii. 19; on deliberation, iii. 19; warns against inconstancy and negligence, iii. 19; teaches that prudence is the virtue of those who govern, iii. 37; on the excellence of justice, iii. 51, 52; on fortitude, iii. 87; in the presence of death, iii. 105; on temperance, iii. 143; his want of appreciation of chastity, iii. 408; on the virtue of meekness, iii. 483.
Ark of the covenant placed in the temple of Dagon, iii. 354.
Arrangement of the work, i. 28.
Arsenius, St., his care of custody of eyes, ii. 131; his heroic mortification of the sense of smell, ii. 184; his humility in dress, iii. 544.
Ass, St. Hilarion compares his body to an, ii. 23.
Assumption of Our Lady, Feast of, iv. 352.
Astio, St., his heroic disclosure of a temptation, i. 119.
Athanasius, St., on the fortitude of St. Antony, iii. 101; a model of patience, iii. 364.
Athenodorus, his remedy against anger, iii. 490.
Athletes, the, their great abstinence, iii. 146.
Attachments, particular, what harm they do in communities, ii. 366.
Attention in reading, i. 147, *sq.*; in prayer, i. 260, *sq.*; of three sorts, i. 260; needed in vocal prayer, ii. 467.
Augustine, St., teaches that love and perfection are identical, i. 12; his definition of perfection, i. 12; teaches that our perfection is found in union of heart with Jesus Christ, i. 14; on desires of perfection, i. 46; all are bound to seek perfection, i. 53; on thought of past sin, i. 74; how to deal with sinners, i. 124; there is always hope for the most hardened sinners, i. 126; on spiritual reading, i. 136; his conversion, i. 139; on the act of divine presence, i. 167; all are subject to distractions in prayer, i. 181; on meditation on the life of Christ, i. 199; on the necessity of grace, i. 216; gives an instance of the power of prayer, i. 248; on vocal prayer, i. 256; to pray much is not to speak much, i. 267; on ejaculatory prayer, i. 296; interior light in dealing with penitents, i. 344; love prevents our feeling weariness in teaching, i. 350; on self-examination, i. 371; on daily Communion, i. 423; we must distinguish lawful and unlawful uses of sense, ii. 5; on St. Paul's penance, ii. 22; on the difficulty of overcoming gluttony, ii. 87; on the need of custody of eyes, ii. 125; his conversation with his mother, ii. 160; on the difficulty of bridling the tongue, ii. 201; the passions not always bad, ii. 222; relates examples of contempt of riches, ii. 264; his definition of friendship, ii. 348; on the uses of temptation, ii. 375; his definition of prudence, iii. 10; on the need of prayer for the gift of counsel, iii. 29; on the excellence of justice, iii. 51; on the connection of justice and peace, iii. 56, 58; that civil society cannot exist without the virtue of justice, iii. 60; on the danger of sins against justice, iii. 67; that no sin against justice is trifling, iii. 69; on the necessity of making restitution for sins of injustice, iii. 78; on the heroic fortitude of the martyr Vincent, iii. 106; on prayer for fortitude during trial, iii. 108; on the power of love of God to produce perfect fortitude, iii. 115; teaches that temperance keeps us unspotted in God's sight, iii. 124; on the virtue of religion, iii. 159; on the

advantage of humble postures in prayer, iii. 177; that God gives grace to those who serve Him faithfully, iii. 229; his spiritual consolations after baptism, iii. 234; that true peace comes from conformity to the will of God, iii. 272; on the necessity of obedience, iii. 275; on the excellence of obedience, iii. 277; on the uses of adversity, iii. 340, 341; the force of example upon, iii. 361; that he who does not suffer is not a Christian, iii. 379; on the excellence of chastity, iii. 404; denies that pagans had knowledge of true chastity, iii. 409; on the danger of familiar intercourse with women, iii. 417; especially for Religious and Clergy, iii. 421; forbade the visits of women, iii. 423; compares chastity of St. John the Baptist with that of Abraham, iii. 443; on the grievousness of the sin of self-complacency, iii. 522; on the necessity of humility, iii. 549, 560: on the joy of the beatific vision, iv. 66; teaches that a firm hope in God's promises will never be deceived, iv. 89; teaches that hope alleviates labour, iv. 102; denies that almsgiving was a virtue in the Schismatics of his day, iv. 145; shows that the growth of charity is in proportion to the diminishing of self-love, iv. 155; that charity makes mortification easy, iv. 161; on the duty of all men to procure the glory of God, iv. 192; on the effects of zeal, iv. 195; on interior repentance, iv. 205; on the abiding in death of those who love not their neighbour, iv. 209; on the dignity of charity, iv. 304; on Christ's precept of charity, iv. 307; that forgiveness of injuries makes us like God, iv. 317; on the heroic forgiveness of enemies, of Christ and St. Stephen, iv. 336; on almsgiving, iv. 341; on charity to the poor, iv. 353; on the sin of omitting fraternal correction, iv. 364, 367; that this duty is incumbent on all, iv. 369; on various modes of fraternal correction, iv. 369; when fraternal correction should be accompanied with severity, iv. 375.

Aurelius of Carthage, miracle wrought by, i. 248.

Austerities, desire of great; how to be dealt with, ii. 66; fruit to be sought by, ii. 67; must never hinder ordinary duties, ii. 96; to be used for uprooting passions, ii. 251; indiscreet, lead to scruples, ii. 425.

Austerity, why so necessary, ii. 27.

Austerity. *See* PENANCE.

Avarice, excuses put forward by, ii. 288.

Avila, John of, conversion wrought by him, i. 76.

Backbiting, ii. 167, 170.

Banquet, spiritual reading compared to a, i. 138, 144.

Baptism requires sorrow as a condition in adults, i. 316.

Barlaam, St., anecdote of, iii. 89.

Barnabas, St., tradition concerning, ii. 281.

Baronius, his remarks on brotherly love, i. 21; anecdote related by, of the Martyr Barlaam, iii. 89; on the excellence of the Sacrifice of the Mass, iii. 164; on standing during prayer, iii. 197: on praying with the hands joined, iii. 199; and with hands uplifted, or stretched out in the form of a Cross, iii. 200; on the obedience of Theodosius to St. Ambrose, iii. 267.

Bartimeus an example of perseverance in prayer, i. 252.

Basil, St., on necessity of direction, i. 92; on qualities of a good Director, i. 109; on purity of intention as an exercise of God's presence, i. 299; on daily examination of conscience, i. 356; on the fall of Solomon, ii. 10; on the modesty required from Priests, ii. 153; on the evil of vainglory, ii. 333; friendship with St. Gregory of Nazianzus, ii. 349; on sensible attachments, ii. 355; on the necessity of prudence, iii. 26; on the advantage of a good counsellor, iii. 35; teaches that the virtue of justice is natural to us, iii. 63; that it is difficult to discern the claims of justice, iii. 69; points out a remedy to this blindness, iii. 70; on the reason why Mose broke the Tables of the Law, iii. 137; on the obedience of the Apostles, iii. 311; a model of patience, iii. 364; on the reason for avoiding familiarity with the opposite sex, iii. 418; on the remedies against anger, iii. 477; on humility in dress, iii. 544; on love of our enemies, iv. 338; on the meekness of Socrates, iv. 530.

Battle, life compared to, ii. 244.

Beauvais, Vincent of, quoted, iv. 88.

Bede, Venerable, quoted, iii. 187.

Bees, an example to us of steadiness under temptation, iii. 432.

Beginners have most need of composition of place, i. 171; subject of their meditations, i. 199; especially called to austerity, ii. 28.

Beginnings not always trustworthy, i. 37; of passions to be attacked, ii. 239.

Beguards, their error condemned by Council of Vienne, i. 10.

Beguines, their error condemned by Council of Vienne, i. 10.

Benedict, St., his experience of the need of custody of eyes, ii. 132; his love of chastity, iii. 397.

Berengaria, Nun, miracle worked by, in reprimand of disobedience, iii. 307.

Bernard, St., various degrees of perfection required in various states, i. 42; on constant advance in perfection, i. 67; encouragement to those who have broken through tepidity, i. 89; early in life deficient in compassion for sinners, i. 122; on bearing with the infirmities of penitents, i. 127; the Director must be as father and mother, i. 127; reading the first step to perfection, i. 131-4; spiritual reading compared to a banquet, i. 138-44; on use of time of consolation, i. 204; description of desolation, i. 206; means of gaining consolation, i. 207; on the connection between meditation and prayer, i. 213; on confidence in prayer, i. 247; vision concerning attention in prayer, i. 261; joined prayer and labour, i. 305; on the need of constant self-examination, i. 360-3; act of contrition, i. 372; anecdote of, i. 402; on devotion to

Our Lady leading to perfection, i. 458, 459; recourse to Our Lady in temptation, i. 487; ill effects of his excessive penance, ii. 56, 57; anecdote illustrating the danger of gluttony, ii. 86; on detraction, ii. 167, *sq.*; on detraction aping zeal, ii. 191; why the love of riches hinders perfection ii. 259; on the Nativity as a protest against avarice, ii. 287; on ambition, ii. 304; on the folly of vainglory, ii. 323; his practice in opposition to vainglory, ii. 326; rebukes the vanity of his sister, ii. 335: on the prerogatives of prudence, iii. 28; an example of temperance, iii. 128; his mortification of his sight, iii. 155; on the Passion of Christ as a source of devotion, iii. 222; on praying for sensible devotion, iii. 240: on the hindrances to devotion, iii. 243; warns Pope Eugenius not to lose devotion by occupation, iii. 247; on true and false obedience, iii. 294, 295; on blind obedience, iii. 305; on the virtue of blind obedience, iii. 308; that it does not extend to sinful commands, iii. 309; that it must be cheerful, iii. 310; that Superiors are to be obeyed as God, iii. 313, 314; on patience as a means of perfection, iii, 338; remarkable patience of, iii. 362; love of chastity of, iii. 399; on the excellence of chastity, iii. 400; on the danger to chastity from familiar intercourse with women, iii. 413; on the virtue of humility, iii. 496; on sin as a foundation of humility, iii. 512; on perfect submission to others, iii. 528; on the dignity of the virtue of humility, iii. 551; says that hope cannot exist without fear, iv. 93; on moderation of zeal, iv. 200; on true love of our neighbour, iv. 297.

Bias, philosopher, maxim of, quoted, iii. 52.

Bilious temperament, iii. 45.

Blasphemy, temptations to, how met, ii. 409, *f.*

Blood of Christ; its power to cleanse the soul, i. 311.

Blosius, on true devotion, iii. 259: anecdote related by, iii. 302; relates a vision of St. Bridget, iii. 461; relates a vision of St. Catharine of Sienna, iv. 116.

Boasting, ii. 310.

Bodies, we are to make victims of our, ii. 50.

Bodily penance. *See* PENANCE.

Body, our partner in good works, ii. 54; motions of, to be controlled by modesty, ii. 136; indulgence of, causes the loss of chastity, iii. 42; must have a share in worship with the soul, iii. 168.

Boldness and rashness, distinguished, iii. 121.

Bona, Nun, her joy in suffering, iii. 380.

Bonaventure, St., on the composition of place, i. 171; on devotion to Our Lady, i. 466; anecdote showing that fear should not stay us from Communion, i. 440; on humility as a source of devotion, iii. 219; on the hindrances to devotion, iii. 242; advice to those in desolation, iii. 256; his life of St. Francis, quoted, iv. 361.

Bonaventure, Sister, effect of one meditation upon her, i. 157.

Book. *See* READING.

Books, how to be chosen, for spiritual reading, i. 151.

Borromeo, Charles, St., his profuse charities to the poor, iv. 350.

Bowing, an act of religion, iii. 174.

Bread, temperance in use of, iii. 128.

Bridget, St., on temptation in time of prayer, i. 193; her revelation on the power of the Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 453; reproached by Christ for an act of impatience, iii. 461.

Brigand, conversion of a, i. 125.

Brutes, set an example of obedience, i. 101; lessons to be learned from, iii. 71; vice degrades man to their level, iii. 132; anger lowers man to their level, iii. 450; their submission to God, iv. 244.

Bulgarians consult the Pope on their manner of prayer, iii. 199-202.

Cain, why his repentance was ineffectual, i. 323.

Cajetan, his doctrine on breach of religious rule, i. 51; teaches that without meditation there is no spirituality, i. 160.

Caleb, an example of fortitude, iii. 95.

Calf, the golden, i. 59.

Camel, soul compared to, ii. 51.

Canaanitish woman an example of perseverance in prayer, i. 254.

Candour with Director, i. 114, *sq.*

Canon of Paris, his wretched end, i. 320.

Cantipré, di, Thomas, anecdote related by, iii. 507; and iv. 342, 343.

"Caradin," a species of bird, i. 448.

Cardinal Virtues, S. Thomas explains, iii. 3; why so called, iii. 85; precedence among them, iii. 130; the origin and offspring of obedience, iii. 278.

Cares that accompany wealth, ii. 260, *sq.*; unfit the soul for prayer, iii. 251.

Carilla, Sanchez, Donna, her horror of venial sins, iii. 511.

Carthage, a whetstone for Roman valour, ii. 378.

Carthusians wear perpetual hair-cloth, ii. 34.

Cassian, on means of perfection, i. 24; on the danger of tepidity, i. 88; on the importance of candour with Director, i. 115; on the resolutions to be formed in meditation, i. 176; on the means of checking detraction, ii. 180; on purity of heart, i. 209; on the evil of vainglory, ii. 314; on the virtue of prudence, iii. 27; that prudence cannot be acquired, iii. 29; on discretion in virtue, iii. 46; on the necessity of relaxation of spirit, iii. 47; on the obedience of Abbot John, iii. 281; of Paul the Simple, iii. 281; of the Egyptian monks, iii. 283; example of obedience recorded by, iii. 300; on the disobedience of Religious, iii. 301; records remarkable obedience of Abbot Mutius, iii. 320; relates patience of St. Paphnutius, iii. 365: on the necessity of prayer to obtain purity, iii. 435; records heroic meekness of a lady of Alexandria, iii. 493; and the heroic humility of St. Paphnutius, iii. 524; on self-accusation as a sign of humility, iii. 538; on the excellence of humility, iii. 551; on the means of obtaining perfect meekness, iv. 329.

Cassiodorus, records the constancy in prayer of Paul of Lybia, iii. 181; and the patience of a novice, iii. 375.

Cat, attachment to, inconsistent with perfect poverty, ii. 276.
Catharine of Genoa, St., revelation vouchsafed to her on the hideousness of one venial sin, iii. 511 ; her humility, iii. 566.
Catharine of Sienna, St., her practice of the presence of God, i. 293 ; her long fast, i. 399 ; her defence of frequent Communion, i. 430 ; her great humility, iii. 563 ; what revealed to her by God about despair, iv. 116 ; her compact of love with God, iv. 228.
Cato, Marcus, meekness of, iv. 331.
Caution in use of touch, ii. 13, *ff.*
Ceremonies, necessity of, iii. 169 ; acts of worship, iii. 193.
Cesarius, anecdote related by, iii. 68 ; records the reverence of St. Ambrose when celebrating Mass, iii. 206 ; anecdote related by, concerning love of our neighbour, iv. 305 ; anecdote related by, concerning charity to the poor, iv. 356.
Chains as instruments of penance, ii. 35, 63.
Charity, why never perfect on earth, i. 11 ; how necessary in a Director, i. 121 ; the end and the means to the spiritual life, iii. 9 ; the essence of our perfection, iii. 9 ; to be preferred to fasting, iii. 46 ; in Director to one who has sinned, iii. 151 ; what required by, in visiting women, iii. 426 ; towards God, a real friendship, iv. 142 ; how it should be esteemed, iv. 143 ; distinction between substantial and accidental, iv. 210, 211 ; does not consist in sensible love, iv. 211, 212 ; lies more in the will than in the feelings, iv. 213, 214 ; consists in labouring for God, iv. 215, 216 ; is seen in a willingness to suffer for God, iv. 217 ; examples of in the Saints, iv. 218 ; test of in penitents, iv. 219 ; towards our enemies, iv. 336, 337 ; to the poor, iv. 339-356 ; how penitents are to be drawn to, iv. 388, *ff.*
Charity. *See* Love of God.
Charles Borromeo, St., his measure of sleep, ii. 38.
Chastity, an instrument of perfection, i. 19 ; often lost by neglect of custody of eyes, ii. 122, *sq.* ; its necessity, iii. 387 ; consists chiefly in the inward act, iii. 388 ; various species, iii. 390 ; excellence of each species, iii. 391-393 ; its connection with holiness, iii. 395 ; likens us to the Angels, iii. 400-404 ; more estimable in men than in Angels, iii. 401 ; endangered by bodily charms, iii. 402, 403 ; courage of Saints in defence of, iii. 402 ; highest of moral virtues, iii. 404 ; unites man to God, iii. 405, 406 ; is united to wisdom, iii. 407 ; unknown to the heathen, iii. 408 ; the virtue of, impossible without faith, iii. 409 ; heroic examples of, iii. 410, 411 ; danger to, from intercourse with the opposite sex, iii. 413 ; better preserved by flight than by combat, iii. 416 ; those under vow of, must not live under same roof with women, iii. 421 ; in women, secured by retirement, iii. 424 ; protected by guard over the senses, iii. 428 ; endangered by indulging the body, iii. 429 ; protected by mortification, iii. 429-442 ; impossible without humility, iii. 431 ; preserved by prayer, iii. 434 ; every fall from, mortal, iii. 438 ; first assaults against to be resisted, iii. 439 ; assisted by candour to Director, iii. 441 ; to be practised by all, iii. 443.
Cheerfulness in obeying, a sign of perfection, iii. 311.
Choice of Director, i. 92-130.
Christ, set an example of meditation, i. 162 ; an example of private and of common life, ii. 115 ; a pattern of modesty, ii. 146, *sq.* ; present at spiritual conversation, ii. 164 ; an example of poverty in His Nativity, ii. 287 ; poverty of, an incentive to poverty, ii. 287 ; life of, a persuasive to poverty, ii. 294 ; Himself approves strict obedience to Directors, ii. 443, *ff.* ; His forgiveness of His enemies, iii. 18, 327 ; Passion of, a source of fortitude, iii. 112, *ff.* ; prayed prostrate during His agony, iii. 201 ; our model in the exercise of patience, iii. 347, *ff.* ; suffers for our example, iii. 349 ; proposes His meekness for imitation, iii. 459-461 ; a pattern of meekness, iii. 477 ; His life a reason for hope, iv. 87 ; Passion of, a remedy against despair, iv. 115 ; Passion of, most effectual, in kindling charity, iv. 169.
Christmas Day, iv. 272 ; Sunday within the Octave of, iv. 313, 314.
Christopher, St., his victory over impurity by prayer, iii. 437.
Chrysologus, Peter, St., on incontinence, iii. 133.
Chrysostom, St., on the evil of thinking over the good we have done, i. 71 ; how to deal with hardened sinners, i. 126 ; on the need of constant prayer, i. 203 ; on the need of prayer, i. 224, *sq.* ; on intercessory prayer, i. 230 ; on perseverance in prayer, i. 253 ; on the presence of God, i. 282 ; on ejaculatory prayer, i. 298 ; exhortation to unceasing prayer, i. 305 ; on daily examination of conscience, i. 357 ; on self-examination, i. 371 ; on the need of penance for faults, i. 373 ; on purpose of amendment, i. 375 ; on Communion, i. 395 ; on desire for Communion, i. 417 ; on the evils of gluttony, ii. 77 ; on the dangers of the sight, ii. 128, *sq.* ; on the duty of checking detraction, ii. 180 ; on inordinate attachment to wealth, ii. 283 ; on ambition, ii. 303 ; on the evil of vainglory, ii. 313 ; on remedies against vanity, ii. 329 ; on the docility of Moses, iii. 14-35 ; on the necessity of docility to act wisely, iii. 15 ; on the excellence of the Sacrifice of the Mass, iii. 163 ; on the Trisagion, iii. 176 ; on the priestly dignity, iii. 187 ; on reverence during the Sacrifice of the Mass, iii, 188 ; on reverence in Church, iii. 206 ; on the necessity of obedience, iii. 273 ; on the uses of adversity, iii. 339 ; great patience of, iii. 364 ; on excellence of chastity in man, iii. 396, 401 ; vivid description of a passionate man, iii. 453 ; on the practice of meekness, iii. 458 ; on the necessity of meekness in a Christian, iii. 458 ; on meekness as a necessary disposition to prayer, iii. 465 ; on the meekness of the Patriarch

Jacob, iii. 472 : his own meekness, iii. 473 ; remedies against anger, iii. 478 ; on the difference between meekness and stupidity, iii. 486 ; on the excellence of humility, iii. 551 ; on sorrow at the sight of souls perishing, iv. 196 ; on sorrow for sin, iv. 207 ; on the love of our neighbour, iv. 305 ; on the excellence of forgiveness of injuries, iv. 316 ; on almsgiving, iv. 345, 346 ; on the spiritual works of mercy, iv. 357 ; on zeal for souls, iv. 359, 379 ; on fraternal correction, iv. 365 ; reproved by a woman for his style of preaching, iv. 385.
Churches are dedicated to God alone, iii. 185.
Cicero, practised self-examination, i. 365 ; on fortitude, iii. 99.
Circumcision of Our Lord, Feast of, iv. 273, 274.
Circumspection, belongs to the executive command of the will, iii. 12 ; a part of prudence, iii. 12-17 ; definition of, iii. 17.
Clare, St., anecdote of her devout converse with St. Francis, ii. 111 ; her custody of her eyes, ii. 130.
Cleanness of heart, ejaculation begging, i. 296.
Clemency, a virtue of Superiors, iii. 446.
Clement of Alexandria, on the way to attain perfect fortitude, iii. 112 ; on the excellence of almsgiving, iv. 349.
Clergy, especially bound to meditation, i. 196 ; warning to, against familiarity with women, iii. 422 ; should never converse alone with women, iii. 427.
Climacus, John, St., on blind obedience, iii. 306 ; relates the remarkable obedience of a monk, iii. 315, 325 ; records heroic humility of a monk, iii. 543.
Clovis, anecdote of, iii. 172.
Cold, penance of bearing, ii. 40.
Colloquy at end of meditation, i. 179.
Columbanus, St., anecdote of, iii. 298.
Comfort in sleep, penance of not seeking, ii. 39.
Commandments, their observance difficult without meditation, i. 154, *sq.* ; salvation promised to those that keep, iv. 72.
Communion, deprivation of, a penance for tepidity, i. 388 : a means of attaining perfection, i. 390-444 ; unites the soul with its end, i. 391 ; effects of, i. 392, *sq.* ; its efficacy illustrated, i. 394 ; compared to food, i. 397 ; sole support of some saints, i. 399 ; represses our passions, and the devils, i. 400 ; its power illustrated, i. 402 ; increases sanctifying grace, i. 406 ; extraordinary effects of, i. 408 ; dispositions for, i. 410, *sq.* ; devotion preparatory to, i. 413 ; effects of, proportional to our dispositions, i. 418 ; who derive most fruit from, i. 418 ; frequency of, i. 419, *sq.* ; daily, i. 420, *sq.* ; why now less frequent than formerly, i. 425 ; daily, recommended by the Council of Trent, i. 426 ; daily, in itself commendable in all, i. 427 ; frequent, rules as to, i. 433, *sq.* ; weekly, recommended, i. 433, &c. ; evils of refraining from, i. 434 ; St. Jerome on hindrances to, i. 438 ; not to be relinquished out of humility, i. 440 ; miraculous, i. 441 ; the medicine for souls in dejection, iii. 258 ; should be frequented in dryness of soul, iii. 258 ; a support in troubles, iii. 385 ; must be accompanied by a lively faith, iv. 48.
Communion, spiritual. *See* SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.
Commutative justice. *See* JUSTICE.
Company, bad, to be avoided, ii. 187.
Compassion, how needful to Directors, iv. 122, 350.
Complacency, love of, first act of divine love, iv. 171, *ff.*
Complaints of men against God, how presumptuous, iv. 262.
Composition of place, i. 164, 171 ; most necessary to beginners, i. 171 ; how to be made in relation to immaterial subjects, i. 172.
Concupiscence, never wholly extinguished, i. 10 ; its objects, iii. 125.
Concupiscible appetite, ii. 220.
Conditional prayer for temporal favours, i. 229.
Conditions of prayer, i. 244 ; of sacramental confessions, i. 315, *sq.*
Confession, general, often the beginning of high perfection, i. 76 ; less hated by the devil than docility, i. 111 ; sacramental, i. 308-354 ; sacramental, two principal effects of, i. 311, *sq.* ; conditions of sacramental, i. 315, *sq.* ; worthless without sorrow, i. 320 ; must be humble, i. 321, *sq.* ; must be made with faith and hope, i. 323 ; integrity of, i. 326, *sq.* ; should include the smallest sins and temptations, i. 328 ; of women, i. 329 ; must be free from duplicity, i. 329 ; hated by the devil, i. 330 ; practical suggestions on, i. 337, *sq.* ; daily, i. 338 ; without *sensible* sorrow may be valid, i. 340 ; to hear, a road to sanctity, i. 353 ; sacramental, or secret, i. 355 ; temptation to omit, out of love of silence, ii. 415, 439 ; of the scrupulous, ii. 433 ; doubts as to validity of past, ii. 462, *ff.* ; must be accompanied by a lively faith iv. 47.
Confession. *See* GENERAL CONFESSION.
Confession. *See* PENANCE.
Confessor, can commute vows and penances, but not restitution, iii. 74.
Confessor. *See* DIRECTOR.
Confessors, difficulties of, i. 344, *sq.* ; need not be deterred by thought of their own failings, i. 345 ; must never despair, i. 348 ; his need of charity, i. 352, and zeal, i. 353 ; of Religious cannot dispense in poverty, ii 296.
Confidence, necessary in prayer, i. 245, *sq.* ; in Our Lady recommended, i. 488 ; in God, a help against temptations, ii. 399 ; in God, grounds of, ii. 401 ; an integral part of fortitude, iii. 381.
Confirmation, sacrament of, strengthens faith, iv. 25.
Conformity, ejaculation expressing, i. 296 ; to God's will, value of, ii. 249 : to the will of God, the chief act of divine charity, iv. 221, 222 ; necessary to divine charity, iv. 224, 225 ; foundation of, iv. 233 ; from motives of self-interest, iv. 233, *ff.* ; in affliction, iv. 234, 235 ; motives of, iv. 241,

ff.; creation a motive of, iv. 241, *ff.*; God's supreme dominion a motive of, iv. 242-246; redemption a motive of, iv. 247, *ff.*; motives of, to be found in God as our Father and Friend, iv. 250; as the Sovereign Good, iv. 251; based on the love of God for us, iv. 266, 272; a proof of confidence in God, iv. 266; renders our present life happy, iv. 267, 268; sweetens adversity, iv. 269; of a Cistercian lay-brother in sickness, iv. 270; of a pious lady disfigured by disease, iv. 271; consequences of, iv. 273; of a beggar, iv. 274, *ff.*; excludes nothing, however trivial, iv. 286-288; motives of to be frequently meditated upon, iv. 289; acquired by confidence in God, iv. 290; of Martin the monk, iv. 291; acquired by purity of intention, iv. 292; to be acquired by degrees, iv. 293; in desolation, iv. 294, 295.

Conscience, manifestation of, especially necessary when tempted against purity, iii. 441; two reasons why, *ibid.*

Conscience. *See* EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

Consent to internal acts, how recognised, ii. 455. *ff.*

Consolation, dangers of, i. 204; practical hints on, i. 204, *sq.*; means of regaining, i. 207; spiritual, a help to devotion, iii. 224; a help to good works, iii. 232; how to be received, iii. 233; only the means to an end, iii. 236, 237; an effect of hope, iv. 100, 101.

Constancy, in devout exercises to be recommended, i. 268; a motive of credibility, iv. 9; a quality of faith, iv. 21.

Constantine of Ancona, St., his heroic humility, ii. 533.

Constantine the Great, an example of meekness, iii. 447.

Contemplation, a step to perfection, i. 131; why not treated in this work, i. 132; a part of mental prayer, i. 153; implies a perpetual sense of God's presence, i. 305.

Contempt, an excellent method for resisting temptation, iv. 58.

Continence, rule of, for married people, iii. 148.

Contraries, disorders cured by, ii. 20, 21.

Contrition, the fourth act in examination of conscience, i. 372; before spiritual communion, i. 443; love of, iv. 204, 205; suited to the present life, iv. 206; recommended to devout persons, iv. 207; example of in a public sinner, iv. 208.

Conversation, modesty in, ii. 142; often a means of grace, ii. 160; may work greater good than sermons, ii. 162-164; worldly, loved by the devil, ii. 163; what sort must be avoided, ii. 180; on spiritual subjects, ii. 194; the devil's harvest-time, ii. 204.

Conversion of St. Paul, iv. 346.

Conversions wrought by pious reading, i. 140; wrought by the thought of God's presence, i. 280, 281.

Core and his company punished for murmuring, ii. 172.

Cornelius à Lapide on self-examination, i. 366.

Corporal works of mercy included in almsgiving, iv. 351, 353; inferior to spiritual iv. 357.

Corpus Christi, Feast of, iv. 292, 293.

Council, Trent, quoted, iii. 169; Seventh General, quoted, iii. 173.

Counsel, a part of prudence, iii. 11, 13.

Counsels, evangelic, constitute Christian perfection, i. 18; evangelic, importance of, i. 22; how they promote perfection, i. 23.

Courage needed in resisting temptation, ii. 380.

Courtiers, an example to Christians, iii. 187.

Covetousness, the pains it involves, ii. 260, *sq.*; punishment of, ii. 265; the root of all evil, ii. 266; how it leads to sacrilege, ii. 268; vision showing the evil of, ii. 271.

Covetousness. *See* RICHES.

Cowardice, generated by scruples, ii. 437; in virtue, not humility, iii. 565.

Crates, not perfected by poverty, i. 19; his contempt of wealth, ii. 263.

Creation, a motive of conformity to God's will, iv. 241, *ff.*

Creatures, God usually works by agency of, i. 95; practice of seeing God in, i. 291; inanimate, their submission to God, iv. 244, 245.

Credibility, motives of, not sufficient for real faith, iv. 7.

Cross, sign of, its efficacy, ii. 397; adoration of, an act of worship, iii. 193.

Cunning, a fault against prudence, iii. 20; St. Augustine upon, iii. 20; has the appearance of prudence, iii. 20.

Curiosity mortified, ii. 255, 256.

Curtius, not a hero of fortitude, iii. 104.

Custody of eyes, how necessary, ii. 119, *sq.*; practical suggestions on, ii. 151, *sq.*; necessary for the lowest degree of virtue, ii. 126; how important, ii. 127, &c.; secures divine help in temptation, ii. 133; an important help to prayer and other virtues, ii. 134.

Custody of eyes. *See* EYES.

Cuthbert, St., his devotion to Mass, iii. 187.

Cyprian, St., on resisting temptation in time of prayer, i. 195; on sloth in prayer, i. 259; on Communion, i. 405-7; on daily Communion, i. 421; on vanity in dress, ii. 156; on the patience of Christ, iii. 347; on the patience of St. Paul, iii. 352; on the miseries of the present life, iii. 359; on the various species of charity, iii. 393; on familiarity with women, iii. 422; on decorum in visits to women, iii. 426; on the excellence of humility, iii. 551; on fraternal charity, iv. 304; on almsgiving, iv. 341.

Cyril of Alexandria, St., on Communion, i. 396; a model of patience, iii. 364; on humility, iii. 554.

Daily Communion, i. 420, *sq.*; objection to, its expediency, i. 428.

Daily work, to be sanctified, iii. 248.

Damian, Peter, St., relates patience of St. Romuald, iii. 366.

Danger, prayer a duty in time of, i. 217.

Daniel, the Prophet, his great abstinence, iii. 145.

David, used hair-cloth, ii. 31; his fall, ii. 122; his self-denial, ii. 256; fortitude of, iii. 92; prayers for fortitude, iii. 108; his devotion to God, iii. 211; tried by suffering, iii. 344; a model of patience, iii. 367; his joy in tribulation, iii. 378; an example of meekness, iii. 478; great humility of, iii. 540; an example of conformity to God's will, iv. 240; his love of his enemies, iv. 316.
Deceit, a fault against prudence, iii. 20.
Deeds, a proof of love, iv. 214, 224, *ff.*
Degrees of perfection, i. 30.
Delay with temptations dangerous, ii. 390, *sq.*
Deliberation, when most necessary, iii. 19.
Delusion, danger of, in devotion to Our Lady, i. 467.
Denys, the Areopagite, on zeal for souls, iv. 360.
Denys, the Carthusian, his rebuke of want of charity in a Confessor, i. 352; his account of Our Lady, ii. 150; his methods for acquiring devotion, iii. 239.
Deportment during prayer, i. 269.
Desert, penance of St. Jerome in the, ii. 25.
Desire of God, ejaculation expressing, i. 276; act of, before Communion, i. 413, 417; act of, in spiritual Communion, i. 441; of Communion, instances of earnest, i. 443; of grace will make our prayer fervent, ii. 320; and hope, difference between, iv. 61.
Desires of perfection, i. 43-91; have reference to good which we do not yet enjoy, i. 44; must be kept alive by fervour, i. 47; motives of, i. 48-59; necessary for advance, i. 60; often vague and unpractical, i. 78; must never cool, i. 81.
Desolation, meditation in time of, i. 187; a proof of God's favour, i. 190; sources of, i. 206; common complaint in, i. 211, 212; a gift of God, iii. 238; exactitude in duty during, iii. 238.
Despair, mimics contrition, i. 325; instances of, i. 328, ii. 74; in Confessors, i. 348; opposed to hope, iv. 85; conquered by hope, iv. 113; power of Blessed Virgin in temptations to, iv. 114; Passion of Jesus Christ, a remedy against, iv. 115; is the greatest of all sins, iv. 116, 125; Directors must seek out the origin of, iv. 124; originates from an undue fear, iv. 126; Directors should know remedies of, iv. 127; should combat by examples of God's love for sinners, iv. 131.
Detachment, imprudently practised, ruins the soul, iii. 27; from money, a means to attain justice, iii. 63, *ff.*
Detraction, how common a sin, ii. 166; likened by the Saints to murder, ii. 170; levity of matter in, ii. 176; encouragement of, ii. 177, 188, *ff.*; how to avoid the guilt of, ii. 179, 180; practical suggestions concerning, ii. 185-197; compared to an arrow, ii. 188; under the semblance of zeal, ii. 191; sometimes under promise of secrecy, ii. 192; often untrue, ii. 193.
Devil hinders perfection, i. 2; undertakes the direction of those who seek to direct themselves, i. 103; his hatred of Directors, i. 111; like a thief, i. 116; discomfited by disclosure of his wiles, i. 117, 118; sometimes urges us to what is good, i. 120; alone beyond the hope of salvation, i. 126; can present images to us, but cannot force us to dwell upon them, i. 184; why he tempts us in time of prayer, i. 192; outward assaults of, i. 194; how most surely overcome, i. 198; causes desolation, i. 206; symptoms of his action, i. 208; his hatred of prayer, i. 222; driven away by prayer, i. 233; power of prayer to hinder him, i. 240; is pleased with vocal prayer in which the heart has no share, i. 259; notes down our distracted prayers, i. 262; overcome by Our Lady, i. 466; inspires indiscreet desires of penance, ii. 57; tempts men to gluttony, ii. 86; seduces us by means of our hearing, ii. 161; loves worldly conversation, ii. 163; has various temptations suited to various occasions, ii. 204; may teach us the road to perfection, ii. 236; by outward attacks hinders perfection, ii. 367; *sq.*; most busy in tempting the pious, ii. 370; is formidable in appearance, but he has no real strength, ii. 373, *ff.*; vanquished by humility, ii. 383; his experience of different modes of meeting temptations, ii. 396; driven away by the Sign of the Cross, ii. 397; tempts each one according to his taste, ii. 408; tempts us to appear good, ii. 414; means to discover his frauds, ii. 417; causes scruples, ii. 426.
Devil. *See* TEMPTATIONS.
Devils, restrained by the presence of God, i. 287; repressed by Communion, i. 400-403; vision of, vanished before the Blessed Sacrament, i. 404; how they lie in wait for our souls, i. 462; conquered by obedience, iii. 291; ruined through pride, iii. 551; faith of, not an act of the will, iv. 12; to be resisted with a feeling of contempt, iv. 58.
Devotion, sensible, not necessary to make prayer profitable, i. 187; true and popular meanings of, i. 158, 468; not to be obtained without meditation, i. 159; sensible, no proof of God's favour, i. 190; roused by vocal prayer, i. 257; preparatory to Communion, i. 413; to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, i. 445, &c.; to Our Lady, nature of true, i. 467; negative or positive, i. 469, 474; means to procure, i. 478; meaning of word, iii. 209; examples of, iii. 210; its sources, iii. 214, *ff.*; produced by suitable considerations, iii. 222; consists not in sensible affection, iii. 224, 225; examples of true, iii. 226, 227; necessary for perfection, iii. 228; sensible, a source of injury to some, iii. 238; feeling of, can be acquired, iii. 239; it is lawful to pray for it, iii. 240; sensible, a reward for serving God, iii. 240; hindrances to, iii. 242, *ff.*; not measured by sensible affections, iii. 254-256; often counterfeit in women, iii. 259.
Dias, Sister Mary, i. 111.
Differences of the spirit in which food is taken, ii. 110
Difficulties hindering meditation, i. 180, *sq.*; of Confessors, i. 344, *sq.*

Diffidence, common fault of pious people, iv. 123; definition of, iv. 125; proceeds from fear of God being greater than hope in Him, iv. 126; how to combat when it has its source in horror of past sin, iv. 128; and when arising from frequent relapse into sin, iv. 130; or from fear of punishment in the next life, iv. 131.
Dignities dreaded by the Saints, ii. 305.
Diocles, his instructions on the presence of God, i. 303.
Diodorus, St., on the virtue of humility, iii. 570.
Direction. *See* DIRECTOR, PENITENT.
Director, may exhort to high virtue, notwithstanding his own sense of imperfection, i. 8; what he must first aim at, i. 75; reprimand by, the beginning of sanctity, i. 76; must proceed with caution, i. 77; by indiscreet requirements retarded St. Teresa, i. 80; how he should deal with the tepid, i. 86, *sq.*; how to deal with those who are discontented with themselves, i. 90; choice of, i. 92-130; how necessary, i. 92, *sq.*; case where none can be obtained, i. 95; the ordinary channel of divine communications, i. 98; gifts to be looked for in, i. 106, *sq.*; should have learning, virtue, and experience, i. 106; what qualities most important for different classes of penitents, i. 112; for what qualities he is often chosen, i. 113; virtues, &c., must be disclosed to him, i. 119; must never betray astonishment or disgust, i. 122; his behaviour when he hears that his penitent has sinned seriously, i. 124; his behaviour with hardened sinners, i. 126; how he must treat women, i. 129; what should have his first attention, i. 196; duty of, when penitent feels consolation, i. 205; how he must guide his penitents in the exercise of the presence of God, i. 303, *sq.*; must appoint the number of his penitents' Communions, i. 429; should be consulted as to measure of fasting, ii. 99; bound to rebuke detraction, ii. 193; his advice should not be made subject of conversation, ii. 194; manifestation to, a help against temptation, ii. 404; obedience to, the only hope of the scrupulous, ii. 442; how he must deal with the scrupulous, ii. 459; peculiar need of prudence in, iii. 37, *ff.*; should apply seriously to the study of moral, ascetical, and mystical theology, iii. 38; should reflect on the advice he has given, iii. 38; should never hear Confessions without having prayed for light, iii. 38; in cases of doubt should beg light from God, iii. 38; in difficult cases should have recourse to prayer, iii. 38; should keep his soul from all passion, iii. 39; should not entertain too great affection for penitents, iii. 39; not aversion, iii. 39; should guard against human respect, iii. 39; must be docile, iii. 40; ought to practise reflection, iii. 40; should study the temperament of penitents, iii. 41; should not dishearten sinners against purity, iii. 151; how should deal with one who, seeking perfection, sins grievously, iii. 151; example of charity in, iii. 152; how to deal with souls deprived of sensible devotion, iii. 254, 255; should train penitents to obedience, iii. 328, 329; must not command beyond a penitent's strength, iii. 330; should recommend prayer in affliction, iii. 382; his need of gentleness to the afflicted, iii. 386; must hold strictest opinions in matters of purity, iii. 438; should insist on promptness in repelling first assaults of temptation against purity, iii. 439; should insist on calmness in inflicting punishment, iii. 491; must train penitents in humility, iii. 561; and to act in blind faith, iv. 60; must see that hope prevails over fear in penitent, iv. 126; how to act when penitent doubts of past Confessions, iv. 129; must encourage the weak, iv. 130; his rule in estimating charity of penitents, iv. 213; must insist much on resignation to the will of God, iv. 289; must teach ejaculatory prayers to obtain this virtue, iv. 289, 293; and exhort to great confidence in God, iv. 290; how may lead penitents to perfect charity, iv. 388, *ff.*
Director. *See* CONFESSOR, PENITENT.
Directors, need of study for, i. 1; have need of direction, i. 106; must be full of charity, i. 121; need great patience, i. 127; St. Bernard's advice to, i. 127, 128; must not oppose all bodily penances, ii. 60; must treat tempted persons gently, ii. 407.
Discernment of spirits, rule on, i. 104.
Discipline, use of, ii. 41 *ff.*; rules for use of, ii. 62.
Disclosure of temptations banishes them, i. 116, *sq.*
Discontent with self, its sources, i. 90; recommended, i. 74.
Discretion, needed in Directors, i. 105; in the exercise of the presence of God, i. 305; needed in curtailment of sleep, ii. 38; in use of penance, ii. 36, 40, 49, &c.; in fasting, ii. 93, *sq.*; the same as prudence, iii. 28; should temper zeal, iv. 200.
Discord, ii. 310.
Discouragement, a great evil, i. 91.
Disinterestedness, example of, related by St. Augustine, iii. 64; another related by St. Gregory, iii. 65.
Disobedience, ii. 310.
Dispositions, for Communion, i. 410, *sq.*; proximate to perfection, iii. 1; imperfect virtues are not such, iii. 3.
Distraction caused by neglect of custody of eyes, ii. 134; hindering meditation, of two kinds, i. 181; in prayer, vision, illustrating their nature, i. 183; remedy for, i. 185; no reason to abandon meditation, i. 198; prayer made with, how pleasing to the devil, i. 259; wilful, incurs punishment, i. 262.
Distraction. *See* MEDITATION, PRAYER.
Distributive justice. *See* JUSTICE.
Dives, his gluttony, and its fruits, ii. 80.
Docility, a part of prudence, iii 12, 14; belongs to counsel, iii. 13; explanation of, iii. 14; St. Chrysostom upon, iii. 14; of Moses, iii. 14; as a means to acquire prudence, iii. 33; in directors, iii. 40; of St. Paul, iii. 40.

Dominic, Saint, profits much by spiritual reading, i. 146; his constancy in resisting diabolic assaults, i. 194.
Door of the lips, ii. 208.
Dorotheus, Abbot, perfected his disciple Dositheus by obedience, iii. 280; on love of our enemies, iv. 334.
Dositheus, St., how trained to sanctity, ii. 108; his special virtue, ii. 238; perfected through obedience by Dorotheus, iii. 280.
Doubt, distinguished from scruple, ii. 423.
Dress, to be regulated by modesty, i. 156; vanity in, ii. 334; should be simple, iii. 544; rules for, iii. 545; when over gay, a snare of the devil, iii. 546.
Drunkenness. *See* INTEMPERANCE.
Dryness, no reason to abandon meditation, i. 198; in prayer, suffered by all the Saints, iv. 60; the result of our faults, iv. 294.
Dryness. *See* ARIDITY.
Dulia explained, iii. 173.
Dunstan, St., zeal for souls of, iv. 362.
Duplicity, confessions must be free from, i. 329.
Duration of meditation, i. 202.
Duties never to be sacrificed for penance, ii. 54.

Eagerness in taking food, ii. 109.
Ears, may cause the loss of chastity, iii. 428.
Easter Sunday, iv. 283; Easter Tuesday, iv. 283, 324; Second Sunday after, iv. 325, 326; Third Sunday after, iv. 327; Fourth Sunday after, iv. 385; Fifth Sunday after, iv. 286, 287.
Edmund of Canterbury, St., his experience of the evil of omitting regular devotions, i. 198; means by which he preserved his chastity, iii. 442.
Effects of devout conversation during meals, ii. 111.
Efficacy of prayer, whence derived, i. 236; complaints against, i. 244.
Ejaculations, a good means of preserving the sense of God's presence, i. 296, *sq.*; always possible, i. 303, *sq.*; and meditation compared, i. 304.
Eleazar, heroic fortitude of, iii. 106.
Elements, corresponding to the temperaments, iii. 42-45.
Elephant, said to be made gentle by the sight of sheep, iii. 459.
Eleutherius, Abbot, punished for spiritual vanity, iii. 537.
Elias, type of strength of Eucharist, iii. 385.
Eliseus, hindered from prayer by a holy anger, iii. 466.
Elizabeth, St., of Hungary, her reverence at Mass, iii. 207.
Elizabeth, St., queen of Portugal, heroic humility of, iii. 540.
Encouragement to prayer, i. 242.
End, fitness for, constitutes perfection, i. 13.
Ends and means, iii. 23.
Envy of the devil towards us, ii. 368; temptation to, how met, ii. 409.
Epiphany, Sunday within the Octave of, iv. 274, 275; Second Sunday after, iv. 315; Third Sunday after, iv. 316, 317; Fourth Sunday after, iv. 317, 318; Fifth Sunday after, iv. 275, 319; Sixth Sunday after, iv. 276, 319.
Ephrem, on Spiritual reading, i. 148-150; on presence of God, i. 279; on daily examination of conscience, i. 356.
Equitius, St., his humility in dress, iii. 544.
Esau a warning against gluttony, ii. 30.
Eucharist, figured by the food given to Elias and Daniel, iii. 385; patience of Jesus in, iv. 322.
Eucharist. *See* COMMUNION.
Euphrasia, means employed by her to preserve chastity, iii. 430.
Euphrosyne, St., wonderful example of obedience, iii 279.
Euprepianus, an example of the dangers of tepidity, i. 87.
Eusebius, the Monk, his penance, i. 373.
Eusebius, of Cæsarea, records heroic chastity of Sophronia. iii. 410; and of three other Christian ladies, iii. 411.
Eusebius, St., teaches that love of God and a Christian life go hand in hand, iv. 142.
Eustochium, St. Jerome's letter to, ii. 24; her great obedience to her mother, iii. 264.
Eve, Mary the Second, i. 447.
Evils of gluttony, ii. 75, &c.
Examen. *See* EXAMINATION.
Examination of conscience, i. 355-389; daily, recommended, i. 356; recommended by various images, i. 360, *sq.*; reasons for, i. 360, *sq.*; necessary for growth in virtue, i. 363; used by pagans, i. 365; of St. Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, i. 368; manner of making, i. 369, *sq.*; all are capable of, i. 384; must never be intermitted, i. 384; frequency of, i. 386.
Examination of Self, not to be used by the scrupulous, ii. 457; a means to secure justice, iii. 69.
Examination, Particular. *See* PARTICULAR.
Example, the force of, iii. 361.
Examples, moral, why useful, i. 7; saying of St. Gregory concerning, i. 7.
Excess always prejudicial, ii. 50.
Excuses put forward by avarice, ii. 288.
Exercises, the spiritual, effectual instrument of conversion, i. 69; the beginning of, high perfection, i. 76; their efficacy, i. 157.
Exorcisms, power of, i. 111.
Experience needed in Director, i 106, 110; how gained, i. 107; exterior employments, presence of God amidst, i. 295.
Eyes, why a dangerous inlet, ii. 119 *sq.*, 127 *sq.*; the windows of the soul, ii. 123, 126; want of custody of, ruined Alypius, ii. 125; how to be controlled by modesty, ii. 141; may cause the loss of chastity, iii. 428.
Eyes. *See* CUSTODY, SIGHT.
Ezechias, King, used general confession, i. 334; his vainglory punished, ii. 308; patience of, under affliction, iii. 363.

Faber, F. Peter, his caution in recommending meditation, i. 197.
Face of God means His presence, i. 274.
Faith, defect of, not the common cause of sin, i. 154; truths of, require to be pondered, i. 157; the best foundation of acts

of the divine presence, i. 169; a necessary condition of prayer, i. 245, *sq.*; its part in the presence of God, i. 290; needed in Confession, i. 323; act of, before Communion, i. 413; act of, in spiritual communion, i. 443; comes by hearing, ii. 159; temptations to, how met, ii. 409; necessary for true virtue, iii. 409; definition of, iv. 4-12; a theological virtue, iv. 5; an infused habit, iv. 5; divine, beyond the power of unaided reason, iv. 6; motives which dispose the mind to, iv. 8; truths of, proved by prophecy, iv. 8; by holiness of Christian law, iv. 8; by wisdom of the Doctors of the Church, iv. 8; by the spread of Christianity, iv. 9; by miracles, iv. 9; by the witness of martyrs, iv. 9; by the unchanging belief of the Church, iv. 9; in what it differs from credibility, iv. 11; divine, what it implies, iv. 11; in the devils, iv. 12; divine, two qualities of, iv. 13; reward of, iv. 13; infallibility of acts of, iv. 13; of St. Louis of France, iv. 15; of Hugh, Prince of Carinthia, iv. 16; virtue of, above all earthly dignities, iv. 16; informed by charity, value of, iv. 17; not lost by sin, iv. 17; living and dead, in what they differ, iv. 17, 40; properties of, iv. 18; firmness in, a quality of, iv. 21; must possess simplicity, iv. 18; from human arguments not meritorious, iv. 18; simplicity of, seen in Abraham, iv. 19, 20; must never waver, iv. 21; frees us from all doubt, iv. 21; illustrated by comparisons, iv. 21; the cause of fortitude, iv. 24; of early Christians, iv. 24; strengthened in Confirmation, iv. 25; may be shown in suffering, iv. 25; joy in, a gift of God, iv. 26; necessity of, for salvation, iv. 27, 28; the beginning of salvation, iv. 28; the root of every good work, iv. 28; the foundation of spiritual life, iv. 29, 30, 32; necessary for understanding supernatural motives, iv. 32; gives us hope of success in perfection, iv. 33, 34; examples of the reward of, iv. 34; a gratuitous gift, iv. 35; depends on the gifts of the Holy Ghost, iv. 35; means of acquiring, iv. 35; acquired by prayer, iv. 35; acquired by frequent acts, iv. 36; should be exercised chiefly on what surpasses our understanding, iv. 36; advantage of vocal prayer in acquiring, iv. 37; recommended by St. Antony on his deathbed, iv. 38; acquired by practice of good works, iv. 39; given to Cornelius for his good works, iv. 41; the life of our souls, iv. 43; must be the rule of our actions, iv. 43-60; practice of in prayer, iv. 44, 46; should suffice us in time of prayer, iv. 46; practice of in Confession, iv. 47; practice of at Communion, iv. 48; of St. Hugh of Lincoln, iv. 49; required in all our actions, iv. 50; improved by temptation, iv. 51; required in temptation, iv. 51; result of in the Saints, iv. 51, 52, 53; improved by adversity, iv. 52, 53; must regulate the practice of every virtue, iv. 54; practical suggestions on, iv. 55, 60; not absent because we feel tempted against it, iv. 55; thoughts opposed to, to be rejected, iv. 57; chief reason of, is the omnipotence of God, iv. 57.

Familiarity with Communion does not breed contempt, i. 437.

Fasting, ii. 30; a fit preparation for great graces, ii. 76; as a remedy against gluttony, ii. 88; extraordinary, ii 88; primitive practice of, ii. 89, *sq.*; of the first monks, ii. 91; discretion in, ii. 93, *sq.*; must never hinder ordinary duties, ii. 96; examples of indiscreet, ii. 98; practical suggestions on, ii. 112; sometimes an occasion of vanity, ii. 114; why unsuitable in community life, ii. 115; a means, not an end, ii. 116; when it loses its reward, ii. 308.

Fathers of the Church, on the necessity of flight in impure temptations, iii. 416, *ff.*; a proof of the truths of faith, iv. 8.

Fathers, of the Desert, their life, i 102.

Faultlessness ordinarily unattainable in this life, i. 10.

Faults, register of daily, i. 380.

Faverius, anecdote of, i. 325.

Fear, reverence must not degenerate into, i. 417; vain, of the scrupulous, ii. 422, *ff.*; of sin, just, gained by scruples, ii. 429; fortitude arms us against, iii. 110; lessened by prevision of evils, iii. 110; of evil, springs from self-love, iii. 117; is awakened by evil apprehended, iii. 335; strengthens hope, iv. 91; not necessarily opposed to hope, iv. 92; some must exist with hope, iv. 93; natural, opposed to hope, its effect upon the heart, iv. 97; abuse of, breeds despair, iv. 126; of punishment, no part of perfect charity, iv. 138.

Feasts of Our Lady, how to prepare for, i. 475.

Fencing a preparation for real combats, i. 178.

Ferrer, Vincent, St., on true humility, iii. 567.

Firmness, a quality of faith, iv. 21.

Fisher, Cardinal, his fortitude, iii. 104.

Flagellants condemned, ii. 44; wanted interior spirit, ii. 67.

Flagellation. *See* Discipline.

Flesh, rebellion of the, ii. 20; and spirit, their perpetual enmity, ii. 230.

Food, Communion compared to, i. 397; examples of moderation in, ii. 107; eagerness in taking, ii. 109; to be taken with pure intention, ii. 110; necessity of, twofold, iii. 143; lawful motive for taking, iii. 147.

Foresight, an integral part of judgment, iii. 12; a part of prudence, iii. 12, 15; of evils, helps to fortitude, iii. 109.

Forgotten sins, i. 332.

Fortitude, perfect when free from every movement of irregular passion, iii. 3; essence of, iii. 85-97; a cardinal virtue iii. 86; has a wider and a narrower sense, iii. 87; illustrious example of, iii. 89; iii. the virtue of martyrs, iii. 91, 103; examples of, iii. 92; twofold functions of, iii. 94; degrees of, iii. 98-107; described by Cicero and Lactantius, iii. 99; shown by perseverance, iii. 101; shown by risking life, iii. 102; in unforeseen calamities, iii.

105; means to acquire, iii. 108-117; the virtue of, iii. 85, *ff.*; may be practised in small occasions, iii. 111; why inspired by love, iii. 117; practised for bad objects, iii. 118; practical suggestions on, iii. 118-123; natural, may be made supernatural, iii. 120; sometimes indiscreet, iii. 121, 122; peculiarly needed by women, iii. 123; moderates fear, iii. 335; virtues that form part of, iii. 381; in suffering, a quality of faith, iv. 24; in faith, causes of, iv. 25.
Fortress, perfection compared to, ii. 1.
Frances of Rome, St., great patience of, iii. 363.
Francis of Assisi, St., what he esteemed to be perfect joy, i. 177; his constancy in resisting diabolic assaults, i. 194; anecdote of his devout converse with St. Clare, ii. 111; discovers a temptation of one of his Religious, ii. 405; anecdote of, ii. 415, 439; his love of chastity, iii. 397; anecdote related of, iii. 440; his self-abasement, iii. 518, 531, 562; his vision concerning the value of hope, iv. 121; on zeal for souls, iv. 361.
Francis Borgia, St., his heroic self-denial, ii. 256; his constancy in prayer, iii. 187; his devotion when saying Mass, iii. 187; assiduity in worship, iii. 178.
Francis of Paula, St., anecdote of, iii. 73.
Francis of Sales, St., each man must keep to his own vocation, i. 78; his use of the discipline, ii. 45.
Francis Xavier, St., his fortitude, iii. 102; his devotion at Mass, iii. 197; his resistance of impurity, iii. 389.
Fraternal charity. *See* LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.
Fraternal correction, at times of strict precept, iv. 364, *ff.*; an act of perfect charity, iv. 364; of obligation in Superiors, iv. 367; must be seasonable, iv. 368, 369; must be gentle, iv. 370; may sometimes require severity, iv. 374, 376; must always be accompanied with charity, iv. 377; the special duty of priests, iv. 378-380.
Fraud, is cunning put into execution, iii. 21.
Free causes, effects produced by, iv. 236.
Free will, the real cause of sin, iv. 236.
Frequency of Communion, i. 419, *sq.* *See* COMMUNION.
Friendship, sometimes helps, sometimes hinders perfection, ii. 348, *sq.*; definition of, ii. 348; kinds of, ii. 349; examples of spiritual, ii. 349; imperfect, their danger, ii. 355, *sq.*; practical suggestions concerning, ii. 360, *sq.*; signs that they are imperfect, ii. 362, *sq.*; remedies for imperfect, ii. 363, *sq.*; duties of true, iv. 171; of God for man; of God, a motive of conformity to His will, iv. 250.
Friendship. *See* LOVE.
Future, care for the, iii. 23.

Galen, description of a passionate man, iii. 454.
Gait to be regulated by modesty, ii. 144.
Garden, soul compared to, i. 360.
General Confession, when necessary, hurtful, or beneficial, i. 331, *sq.*; prescribed in many Religious Orders, i. 333; advantages of, i. 334; effects of, i. 335; divine admonition to make, i. 336.
Genuflection, as an act of religion, iii. 193.
George the Martyr, St., Feast of, iv. 348.
Gerson; few keep the commandments who neglect the counsels, i. 56.
Gertrude, St., why all have not sensible devotion, i. 188; vision recommending frequent Communion, i. 431; her conformity to the will of God, iv. 289.
Giezi punished for his covetousness, ii. 265.
Gifts, concealment of spiritual, ii. 330.
Glory and honour distinguished, ii. 298; in what it differs from vanity, iii. 497; external, alone wanting in God, iv. 190; of God to be advanced by all men, iv. 192.
Gluttony, as a hindrance to perfection, ii. 68, &c.; five forms of temptation to, ii. 69; wherein its sin consists, ii. 71; Adam and Christ tempted to, ii. 72; punishment of, ii. 73-74; five daughters of, ii. 75, &c.; evils of, ii. 75, &c.; usually leads to much talking, ii. 80; the first vice to be attacked, ii. 84; danger of, ii. 86; remedies against, ii. 87, &c., 100; peculiar difficulty of overcoming, ii. 87; cured by temperance, ii. 100; possible with the coarsest fare, ii. 109, temptation to, how met, ii. 413; inclines to five failings, iii. 142.
Gluttony. *See* MEALS, TASTE.
God sometimes does the part of a Director, i. 93; usually employs the agency of His creatures, i. 95; surpasses all that we can imagine, i. 168; loves us when He sends spiritual trials, i. 189; sometimes sends desolation, i. 206; testifies to the power of prayer, i. 236, 241; attention to, in prayer, i. 260; presence of, i. 272-307; a means to perfection, i. 272; various forms, i. 273; Scripture proofs of its value, i. 274, *sq.*; its efficacy explained, i. 275, 278, *sq.*; familiar to the patriarchs, i. 275; how efficacious in working conversions, i. 280, 281; methods to cultivate, i. 288, *sq.*; maintained by ejaculations, i. 297; practised most easily in solitude, i. 300; possible even in the midst of business, i. 301; practical hints on, i. 303; love of, leads to sense of His presence, i. 307; confession of sin to, i. 355; helps those that help themselves, ii. 133; permits His servants to be tempted, for what ends, ii. 375, *ff.*; desires us to place confidence in Him, ii. 400; sometimes causes scruples, ii. 428, 430, *ff.*; the source of all prudence, iii. 29; love of, secures fortitude, iii. 115; the object of religion, iii. 158, *ff.*; gains nothing by our worship, iii. 166; thought of, a source of devotion, iii. 249; His concourse as Universal Cause, iii. 513; as Source of the Supernatural, iii. 514; His omnipotence, the chief motive of divine faith, iv. 57; and the only limit to our hope, iv. 65; promises of God should enkindle hope, iv. 73; promises of, are sure of fulfilment, iv. 73, 76; goodness of a motive of hope, iv. 77; lively trust in required at prayer, iv. 111, 112; hope in

our strength in temptation, iv. 118; possession of, is perfect charity, iv. 133; friendship of, acquired by charity, iv. 142; friendship of, to be prized, iv. 143: goodness of, excites our love, iv. 163; author of all good, iv. 164; in Him is all good, iv. 164; perfect holiness of, iv. 165; perfections of, are inconceivable, iv. 166; love of for man, iv. 168; perfections of, excite our love, iv. 173, *ff.*; grace of, will communicate Appreciative Love, iv. 188; does not will sin, iv. 236; claims of, upon us as Creator, iv. 241, *ff.*; claims of, upon us as Redeemer, iv. 247, *ff.*; claims of, upon us as our Father, iv. 250; the Sovereign Good, iv. 251; His watchful care of man, iv. 254.

God, presence of. *See* PRESENCE.

Good works, necessary to strengthen faith, iv. 39, *ff.*; wrought the conversion of Cornelius, iv. 41; of free creatures intended by God, iv. 236.

Goodness of God, a motive of conformity to His will, iv. 251.

Governing prudence, iii. 18.

Grace, often imitates solid virtue, i. 37; indispensable in meditation, i. 170; *absolute* need of, i. 215; how gained, i. 216; habitual, inconsistent with sin, i. 332; given to assist Confessors, i. 344; sanctifying, how first imparted, and how increased, i. 406; state of, a necessary disposition to Communion, i. 411; Blessed Virgin Mary can obtain it for us, i. 451; given to all who serve God faithfully, iii. 229; actual, necessary for exciting the will, iii. 515; much needed for the attainment of humility, iii. 563; sanctifying, required for meritorious actions, iii. 514; our co-operation with, should not diminish humility, iii. 515; necessary to attain humility, iii. 563; necessary for an act of divine faith, iv. 6; necessary for an act of hope in God, iv. 62; bestowed on those who ask it, iv. 72; necessary for every supernatural act, iv. 135; effect of, in the soul, iv. 141; renders easy what is difficult to self-love, iv. 161; by it victory over self is possible, iv. 188.

Gratitude a potential part of justice, iii. 334; conditions of, iii. 334.

Gregory of Agrigentum, St., anecdote of him, i. 302.

Gregory of Nazianzus, St., on the want of modesty of Julian the Apostate, ii. 140; on the presence of God, i. 276; on the true ornaments of women, ii. 157; and St. Basil, their friendship, ii. 349; on the Machabean martyrs, iii. 97; his reward for purity of heart, iii. 407; on the meekness of Christ, iv. 327; on the dignity of almsgiving, iv. 349.

Gregory of Nyssa, St., on the virtue of justice, iii. 48; that forgiveness of our enemies makes us like to God, iv. 316; on almsgiving, iv. 349.

Gregory the Great, St., encourages himself in an arduous task, i. 8; on the worship of the golden calf, i. 59; on the difference of things temporal and spiritual, i. 77; not to advance is to go back, i. 86; God sometimes does the part of a Director, i. 93; on openness with our Director, i. 119; on the charity to be shown by a Director, i. 121; on spiritual reading, i. 135; Abraham an example of rejecting distractions in prayer, i. 186; on attention in vocal prayer, i. 258; on sorrow as necessary in confession, i. 317; on the need of self-examination, i. 385; on the evils of touch, ii. 8; examples of watchfulness in use of touch, ii. 13; on excess in penance, ii. 54; on gluttony, ii. 69, *sq.*; gives examples of the punishment of gluttony, ii. 73, 74; on the evil of uncontrolled laughter, ii. 152; on the modesty befitting a Religious, ii. 154; some passions are to be exterminated, others offered to God, ii. 228; on the deathlessness of the passions, ii. 245; on detachment from riches, ii. 274; grievousness of a violation of religious poverty, ii. 291; his dread of dignities, ii. 305; on affection for kindred, ii. 344; on diabolic temptations, ii. 369-371; maxim of his perverted by the scrupulous, ii. 454; on inconsiderateness and precipitation, iii. 19; on true fortitude, iii. 100; on the fortitude of the just, iii. 118; on that of the reprobate, iii. 118, 119; on the test of the love of God, iii. 218; that purity of heart is a source of devotion, iii. 244; that humility is compatible with knowledge of our own gifts, iii. 250; on liberty in choice of state of life, iii. 270; on the excellence of obedience, iii. 277; on obedience as a sacrifice to God, iii. 286; on the value of difficult obedience, iii. 297; on bearing trial through hope of eternal reward, iii. 353; on the usefulness of forecasting trial, iii. 383; anecdote related by, iii. 419; on the danger to Clergy of familiar intercourse with women, iii. 429; on the necessity of humility for the preservation of chastity, iii. 431; of repelling the first assaults of temptation against purity, iii. 439; exact description of a man in anger, iii. 452; that anger banishes the spirit of prayer, iii. 464, 467; a remedy for curbing the vice of anger, iii. 476, *ff.*; on the remedies against anger, iii. 476, 477, 479, 490; on the excellence of humility, iii. 556; on false humility, iii. 569; raised to the pontificate for his charity to the poor, iv. 288; on false charity, iv. 297; that charity is the root of all good, iv. 301; on the means of obtaining perfect meekness, iv. 329; fed Christ disguised as a pilgrim, iv. 352; on zeal for souls, iv. 360; on want of zeal in priests, iv. 382.

Gregory VII., St., exhorts Aragius to patience, iii. 372.

Gretser on the Flagellants, ii. 44.

Growth, bodily and spiritual, compared, i. 33; in perfection imperceptible, i. 79.

Guide, qualities of, iv. 387.

Guide. *See* DIRECTOR.

Guile, a fault against prudence, iii. 20; is cunning put into execution, iii. 21.

Habacuc, type of strength of Eucharist, iii. 285.

Hair-cloth, use of, ii. 31, *ff.*; different sorts of, ii. 35.
Happiness, proportioned to our conformity with the divine will, iv. 272.
Haste in reading to be avoided, i. 147, 148.
Health must not be injured by penance, ii. 51.
Hearing, sense of, ii. 158, &c.; good and bad use of, ii. 158; dangers of, ii. 161; sense of, source of ruin to many, ii. 185; practical suggestions concerning, ii. 185-194.
Heart, the Sacred, its affections during the scourging, i. 175; purity of, i. 309, *sq.*
Heat, penance of bearing, ii. 40.
Heathens, ignorant of the virtue of chastity, iii. 408.
Heathens. *See* PAGANS.
Heaven, joy of, iv. 66; foretaste of, in an ecstasy, iv. 67; the object of a Christian's hope, iv. 68.
Hedwige, St., her great abstinence, iii. 150.
Heli, the High Priest, Director to Samuel, i. 96; patience of, in affliction, iii. 363; his conformity to God's will, iv. 252.
Heliodorus, St. Jerome's advice to, i. 49.
Henry VIII. of England, how he received the Holy Viaticum, i. 416.
Heresy sometimes springs from sensuality, iii. 138.
Hero the Monk, how illuded by the devil, i. 103.
Heroism, of the heathen, fictitious, iii. 6; of Christian virtue, iii. 6; St. Thomas' explanation of, iii. 7; generally arises from difficulty, iii. 8; supposes virtue to be performed with ease and pleasure, iii. 8.
Hilarion, St., how assaulted by the devil, i. 194; his severe treatment of his body, ii. 23; his deep humility, ii. 324; his mortification to preserve chastity, iii. 429.
Hilary, St., on the dispositions needed for Communion, i. 433.
Hindrances to perfection, Treatise II.; twofold, ii. 2.
Holiness of Christian law, a motive of credibility, iv. 8.
Homage, acts of, to Our Lady, i. 475.
Honoratus the Abbot sanctified without external direction, i. 93.
Honour, love of, ii. 297.
Honour and glory distinguished, ii. 298.
Honours dreaded by the Saints, ii. 305.
Hope, needed in Confession, i. 323; how necessary for Confessors, i. 348; extinguished by scruples, ii. 437, *ff.*; to be cultivated by the scrupulous, ii. 449; begets patience, iii. 357; not lost by sin, iv. 17; definition of, iv. 61; in what differs from desire, iv. 61; requires an effort of the soul, iv. 61; act of theological, impossible to the unaided will, iv. 62; a gift of the Holy Ghost, iv. 63; its object, iv. 64, 65; main object of, the beatific vision, iv. 64; requires an infinite good for its object, iv. 65; ceases with possession of God, iv. 65; means to attain our final end, an object of, iv. 69; secondary object of, iv. 69; temporal blessings may be one object of, iv. 70; should not be diminished on account of trials, iv. 71; is founded on the promises of Christ, iv. 72; not to have, is to disbelieve in power and faithfulness of God, iv. 73; St. Joseph the Patriarch and the Emperor Charles the Fifth, examples of true hope in God, iv. 74, 75; motive of, God is all-powerful to fulfil His promises, iv. 76; other motives of, the many goodnesses of God and the Passion of Jesus Christ, iv. 77; God calls Himself our, iv. 78; reliance on God alone a chief property of, iv. 79; in men foolish, iv. 80; Bishop Fronto's confidence in God illustrated by an incident, iv. 82; and rewarded by God, iv. 83; in ourselves, misplaced, iv. 84; is middle state between presumption and despair, iv. 85; seen in the example of Abraham, iv. 86; St. Paul speaks of, iv. 86; Jesus Christ our advocate in Heaven, a strong motive for, iv. 87; Vincent of Beauvais illustrates the power of, iv. 88; and St. Augustine, iv. 89; texts from Scripture upon, iv. 90; strengthened by fear, iv. 91; fear not necessarily opposed to, iv. 92; cannot exist without some fear, iv. 93; necessary for the Christian traveller, iv. 94; should be evenly balanced between God's promises and our own miseries, iv. 95; enlarges the heart, iv. 96; opposed to merely natural fear, iv. 97; proof that it enlarges the heart, iv. 98; makes difficult things easy, iv. 99; consoles and gladdens, iv. 100; more than earthly joy and consolation, iv. 101; makes toil agreeable, iv. 102; example of a monk who endured hardships on account of, iv. 103; encourages in time of trial and trouble, iv. 104, 105; overcomes obstacles to attainment of the highest perfection, iv. 106; the strength of martyrs in their fearful torments, iv. 107-110; example of strength given to martyrs by, iv. 109; to be attained by prayer, iv. 111; how despair is to be conquered by, iv. 113; in intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, how powerful, iv. 114; and in the wounds of our Blessed Lord, iv. 115; secures victory over temptations to sin, iv. 117, 118, *ff.*; of much avail both against mental and bodily trials, iv. 120; the measure of our virtue, iv. 122; practical suggestions on, iv. 122-132; pious persons often deficient in, iv. 123; Directors should seek out the origin of want of, iv. 124; complete absence of, the most damning of all sins, iv. 125; how the Director should re-introduce, into the soul when frightened of not being forgiven, iv. 128, 130, *ff.*; springs from the love of concupiscence, iv. 138; must be united to charity, iv. 139.
Horatii, not heroes of fortitude, iii. 104.
Horses, eyes likened to, ii. 128; tongue compared to unruly, ii. 200.
Hosius, Cardinal, his devout preparation for saying Mass, iii. 187.
Hugh of Lincoln, St., his charity with sinners, i. 351; his faith, iv. 49.
Humiliation, the path to humility, iii. 535 may come from without, iii. 542.

Humiliations and humility, how connected, ii. 252.
Humility, a fruit of act of divine presence, i. 166; peculiarly needed in time of consolation, i. 204, a necessary condition of prayer, i. 245, 249, *sq.*; faint-heartedness mistaken for, i. 265; never hinders prayer, i. 265; needed in Confession, i. 321, *sq.*; true and false, i. 323; act of, before Communion, i. 413, 414; must not stay us from Communion, i. 440; act of, in spiritual Communion, i. 443; often mimicked by vainglory, ii. 337, *sq.*; promoted by experience of temptations, ii. 381, *ff.*; illustrious example of, ii. 383; gained by scruples, ii. 429; an immediate cause of devotion, iii. 219; necessary in time of spiritual consolation, iii. 233; necessary to preserve chastity, iii. 431, 432; a part of temperance, iii. 495; of the heart, iii. 496, 497; of the mind, iii. 496, 497; founded on truth, iii. 496, 529, 530; in the thought of what we have once been, iii. 501; in the thought of what we are, iii. 503; in the thought of our sins, iii. 505-511; in the thought of sin forgiven, iii. 509; in the thought of possible sins, iii. 510; to be derived from our virtues, iii. 516; consists in subjection to God, iii. 518, 567; attitude of, towards God, iii. 518, *ff.*; consistent with admission of virtue, iii. 520; shuns honour, iii. 521; perfect, gives all honour to God, iii. 522; esteems disgrace as honour, iii. 522; attitude of, towards men, iii. 526, *ff.*; in submission to others, iii. 526, 568, 569; how it truly places us beneath all, iii. 529-531; tested by insult, iii. 533; in insult, made easy by the love of Christ, iii. 534; is the effect of humiliation, iii. 535; must be shown in outward acts, iii. 535; in our words, iii. 536, 537; inconsistent with excuses, iii. 538; examples of—in works, iii. 540; in our actions, iii. 540; in lowly occupations, iii. 541; of Religious, iii. 541; to be seen in our dress, iii. 544; in gestures, iii. 547; exterior, must be joined with interior, iii. 548; necessary for perfection, iii. 549, 552; the foundation of all virtue, iii. 550, *ff.*; opinions of the Fathers on its necessity, iii. 551; no progress in virtue without, iii. 552, 553; a preservative from sin, iii. 557; how to be acquired, iii. 562; requires a grace from God, iii. 563; its practice must never cease, iii. 564; is never faint-hearted, iii. 565; has trust in God, iii. 566; three degrees of, iii. 568; of the perfect soul, iii. 570.
Husbandmen, an example to Christians, iii. 353.
Hyperdulia, iii. 173.
Hypocrisy, ii. 310.

Idiota, quoted, i. 455.
Ignatius, St., anecdote of, i. 34, 35; on the dangers of tepidity, i. 88; on need of direction, i. 104; his indifference to the quality of food, ii. 113; his conversion wrought by pious reading, i. 140; his diligence in examining his conscience, i. 359; method of examination of conscience, i. 369: his care in the particular examination, i. 383; the importance attached by him to custody of eyes, ii. 151; on detachment from riches, ii. 273; troubled with scruples, ii. 428; his great natural fortitude changed to supernatural, iii. 120; used to pray on the roof of the house, iii. 197; on true humility, iii. 567; zeal for souls of, iv. 362.
Ignatius, the Martyr, St., on spiritual Communion, i. 442; his fortitude, iii. 103.
Illiterate persons, what substitutes they have for meditation, i. 163.
Illuminati, their error, i. 10.
Illuminative way, i. 31; meditations suitable for, i. 199.
Illusions beset those who guide themselves, i. 103.
Images, as helps to divine presence, i. 166; sensible, liable to misuse, i. 169; as a means to retain the sense of God's presence, i. 306; veneration of, act of religion, iii. 193.
Imagination accessible to the devil, i. 184; its part in the presence of God, i. 289; furnishes food to the passions, ii. 119.
Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, Feast of, iv. 344.
Immediate preparation for meditation, i. 164.
Impatience, temptation to, how met, ii. 413.
Impeccability of Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 10; ordinarily unattainable in this life, i. 10.
Impediments to perfection, Treatise II. *See* HINDRANCE.
Impurity, makes us like beasts, iii. 132: extinguishes the light of reason, iii. 133; unfits for our duties, iii. 136; the cause of loss of faith in most of the heresiarchs, iii. 138.
Incense, an emblem of prayer, iii. 180.
Inconsiderateness, a vice opposed to judgment, iii. 19.
Inconstancy, a fault by defect against prudence, iii. 19; Aristotle warns against, iii. 19.
Incontinence. *See* INTEMPERANCE.
Indifference shown by St. Ignatius Loyola to the quality of his food, ii. 113.
Industry indispensable in meditation, i. 170.
Infidels less tempted by the devil than Christians, ii. 368.
Injustice, acts of, ii. 268; small acts of, iii. 67; small acts of, not a trifling sin, iii. 69; difficult to detect in ourselves, iii. 69; a remedy prescribed to our blindness on this score, iii. 70; of high-born ladies, iii. 73, of spiritual men, iii. 73; of landlords, iii. 73; of tradesmen and merchants, iii. 73; delusions of those who sin by, iii. 79, 81, 83.
Instruments of perfection, i. 19.
Integrity of Confession, i. 326, *sq.*
Intellect, its power to move the will, i. 155.
Intelligence, a part of prudence, iii. 12, 13; belongs to counsel, iii. 12; the reason why iii. 15; St. Ambrose quoted, iii. 13.

Intemperance, a most disgraceful vice, iii. 132; ruins reason, iii. 132; degrades man to the level of the brutes, iii. 132; its foulness illustrated, iii. 134; unfits for the functions which belong to man, iii. 137; its horrible punishment, iii. 139.
Intention, purity of, an exercise of God's presence, i. 299; ii. 326; in taking food, ii. 110.
Intercessory prayer, i. 230; its conditions, i. 235.
Invitatory, in the divine Office, its object, iii. 195.
Involuntary distractions in prayer, i. 181.
Irascible appetite, ii. 220.
Isaac, a model of obedience, iii. 264; proved by suffering, iii. 344.
Israelites, their reasons clouded by gluttony, ii. 78.

Jacob, meekness of, overcomes Esau, iii. 471.
Jacob's ladder a symbol of perfection, i. 67.
James the Apostle, St., his assiduity in prayer, iii. 181; his remedy for sorrow, iii. 382; exhorts to patience, iii. 338; Feast of, iv. 350, 351.
Jerome, St., mortification is not itself perfection, i. 20; obligation of Religious to seek perfection, i. 49; on necessity of direction, i. 99, 105; on spiritual reading, i. 133; admonished by a vision to forsake profane reading, i. 142; exhorts Celantia to practise meditation, i. 161; how he received the Holy Viaticum, i. 415; on daily Communion, i. 421; on hindrances to Communion, i. 438; his account of St. Hilarion, ii. 23; his penance, ii. 24; on certain abuses in fasting, ii. 90; on discretion in fasting, ii. 94, *sq.*; on indiscreet fasting, ii. 97; on use of wine, ii. 104; on moderation in quantity of food, ii. 106; fasting is a means, not an end, ii. 117; on the sin of encouraging detraction, ii. 178; on the evils of free conversation, ii. 186; grievousness of a violation of religious poverty, ii. 290; on the evil of vainglory, ii. 315; on the humility of St. Hilarion, ii. 324; on diabolic temptations, ii. 368; dangers of delay in rejecting temptation, ii. 390; on the virtue of prudence, iii. 37; on the zeal of the early Christians for martyrdom, iii. 91; on the great abstinence of St. Paula, iii. 150; prayed striking his breast, iii. 202; on obedience as a true Sacrifice, iii. 287; that we are to obey Christ in our Superiors, iii. 303; his letters to Heliodorus quoted, iii. 334; on the patience of the pagans, iii. 370; on the excellence of chastity, iii. 392; on the danger of familiarity with women, iii. 414; warns those bound by vow of chastity to shun familiar intercourse with women, iii. 421; his mortification to preserve chastity, iii. 429; his study of Hebrew for that purpose, iii. 430; his advice to Salvina, concerning chastity, iii. 438; on humility of heart, iii. 519; on the meekness of St. Paula, iv. 332.
Jesus, His spirit opposed to vainglory, ii. 320.
Jesus. *See* CHRIST.
Jews, their devotion in the desert, iii. 210.
Job, his guard over his eyes, ii. 120; his great trust in God, iii. 257; tried by suffering, iii. 344; his patience the fruit of hope, iii. 356; and of faith, iii. 363; his conformity to the will of God under affliction, iv. 238, 293.
John, Abbot, great obedience of, iii. 281.
John, the Almoner, his great charity to the poor, iv. 350.
John the Apostle, St., his zeal and love in converting a sinner, i. 125.
John the Baptist, St., sanctified without external direction, i. 93; his penitential garb, ii. 34; Feast of, iv. 349.
John Climacus, St., his prison for penitents, ii. 47.
John Colombino, St., his conversion wrought by pious reading, i. 140.
John Damascene, St., his definition of prayer, i. 213; on desire for Communion, i. 417; his conversion resulting from his own reflections, iv. 10.
John the Evangelist, St., anecdote of, iii. 47; Feast of, iv. 272.
John, Spanish boy, heroic fortitude of, iii. 107.
Jonathan, a warning against gluttony, ii. 70.
Joram used hair-cloth, ii. 32.
Josaphat, king, prayed to God for counsel, iii. 29; his recourse to God in suffering, iii. 383.
Joseph, St., an example of true hope in God, iv. 74.
Joshua, fortitude of, iii. 95.
Judas, why his repentance was ineffectual, i. 323; fell through covetousness, ii. 265; cause of his fall, iii. 67.
Judgment, after death, severity of, i. 366; forestalled by self-examination, i. 366; a part of prudence, iii. 11.
Judith, used hair-cloth, ii. 31; her fortitude, iii. 96.
Julian, death of, i. 240; greatly wanting in modesty, ii. 140; in distress used the Sign of the Cross, ii. 398.
Justice, perfect when fixed in unceasing union with God's will, iii. 3; cannot exist without prudence, iii. 24; iii. 48, *ff.*; nature of, iii. 48; various meanings of, iii. 48; defined by Ulpian, iii. 49; commutative and distributive defined, iii. 50; kinds of, iii. 50; its excellence, iii. 51, *ff.*; examples of love of, iii. 54, 55; necessity of, iii. 56, *ff.*; the safeguard of peace, iii. 57, *ff.*; necessary to social life, iii. 60; means to acquire, iii. 63-71; that the virtue is natural to us, iii. 63; punishment of small fault against, iii. 68; sense of, in a wolf, iii. 71; practical suggestions as to ordinary violations of, iii. 72, *ff.*; sins against, found in the devout, iii. 73; how frequently violated, iii. 79; a Cardinal Virtue, iii. 86; virtues that form part of, iii. 324.
Justin, Martyr, St., on the reason for praying with the face towards the East, iii. 104.
Justinian, Laurence, St., mortification of his sight, iii. 153; that cares are a hindrance

to devotion, iii. 252; how to obtain sensible devotion, iii. 253; that want of sensible devotion should not impede from holy Communion, iii. 258; on the love of complacency, iv. 177; on the pusillanimity of the good, iv. 187.
Juvenal, on the fears which wealth entails, ii. 260.

Kempis, A', Thomas, anecdote related by, iii. 511, and iv. 300.
Kindred, love of, may hinder perfection, ii. 339, *sq.*
Kneeling, assiduity of the Saints in, i. 291.
Knowledge of sin to be sought in self-examination, i. 371.

Labour, bodily, a safeguard to chastity, iii. 430; sweetened by hope, iv. 102; for God, is true love, iv. 214, 215.
Lacedemonians, their silence, ii. 212.
Lactantius, what recompense he sought for his toils, i. 9; what is true repentance, i. 319; on true fortitude, iii. 99; on the worship of praise, iii. 179; on the desire of martyrdom of the early Christians, iv. 24; on charity to the poor, iv. 351.
Ladder of perfection, from St. Bernard, i. 131.
Lady Day, iv. 347.
Lampridius quoted, iii. 54.
Last things, meditation on, how efficacious, i. 69.
Latria, explained, iii 173.
Laughter, sometimes a mark of want of modesty, ii. 137; to be regulated by modesty, ii. 143; must be kept under control, ii. 152.
Launomar, St., anecdote of, ii. 269.
Laurence, Justinian, St, on fasting, ii. 92; on custody of eyes, ii. 135; on the devil as a cause of scruples, ii. 426; on scruples concerning sins of past life, ii. 463.
Laurence, Justinian, St. *See* JUSTINIAN.
Lauria, Cardinal, on heroic virtue, iii. 6.
Law in the members, ii. 20.
Laws, why instituted, i. 12.
Laymen, means whereby they may find humiliation, iii. 540
Learning needed in Directors, i. 106, 110; the most important requisite for directing those who are led in extraordinary ways, i. 112.
Lechery. *See* IMPURITY.
Lent, First Sunday of, iv. 279; Second Sunday of, iv. 280, 321; Third Sunday of, iv. 280, 281; Fourth Sunday of, iv. 282, 322.
Leo, Brother, the Franciscan, his vision, i. 450.
Leo the Great, St., attributes the fortitude of St. Laurence to his love of God, iii. 116.
Lessius, on the nature of prudence, iii. 11.
Letters tend to foster imperfect attachments, ii. 365.
Liberality to God sure to be rewarded, ii. 254; a potential virtue of justice, iii. 334.
Libertinus, Abbot, remarkable patience of, iii. 362, 367.
Liburnia, St., effect of Communion upon her, i. 394.
Lidwina, St., a model of patience, iii. 369, 377; anecdote of, iii. 377; model of heroic meekness, iii. 445; an example of meekness and patience, iii. 445; on hope in God's mercy, iv. 132; her perfect conformity to the will of God, iv. 293.
Life of soul supported by Communion, i. 398.
Life, not shortened by penance, ii. 40; fortitude in risking, iii. 102.
Lopez, Gregory, his conformity to the will of God, iv. 289.
Louis Bertrand, St., his use of the Discipline, ii. 45.
Louis IX., St., of France, his faith in the Holy Eucharist, i. 413; scourged by his Confessor, ii. 42; his esteem for the faith, iv. 15; his firm faith at death, iv. 22.
Louis IX. of France, anecdote of, iii. 73.
Love, of Benevolence, explained, iv. 138, 189, *ff.*; for God, how to be practised, iv. 190, 191; to be practised by all, iv. 192; the cause of zeal, iv. 194; of Complacency, best suited for the life to come, iv. 206; of Concupiscence, explained, iv. 138; of Contrition, explained, iv. 204; this best suited to present life, iv. 206.
Love of God, secures fortitude, iii. 115; the immediate source of devotion, iii. 216; does great things for God, if it really exists, iii. 216; was great in Mary Magdalen, iii. 218; paths leading to, iv. 1; alone brings to perfect possession of God, iv. 133; its motive is the goodness of God, iv. 134; is an infused theological virtue, iv. 135; is satisfied with nothing save God, iv. 136; attaches us to God for His own sake alone, iv. 137, 139, 140; is a real friendship with God, iv. 141; all virtue disappears when it is absent, iv. 144, 145; when present all virtues flourish, iv. 146; compared to the Sun, iv. 147; why the other virtues depend upon, iv. 148; example of the effect of, iv. 149, 150; attained by earnest desire and petition from God, iv. 151; also by mortification of our self-love, iv. 152; irreconcilable with love of self, iv. 153; is in proportion to the diminution of self-love, iv. 155; how necessary to subject self-love to, iv. 154; opposed to even small imperfections, iv. 158; renders easy mortification of our own appetites, iv. 161; increased by meditation, iv. 162; excited in us by the thought of God's goodness, iv. 163; and by the beauty and loveliness of God, iv. 164; as also by His holiness, iv. 165; and His power, iv. 166; for us, should move us to love Him, iv. 168; enkindled by the thought of the Passion, iv. 169; example of the effects of, iv. 170; four kinds of, Complacency, Preference, Benevolence, Repentance, iv. 171; excited by the thought of God's perfections, iv. 173, 175; should be our relief in sufferings, iv. 176; should be enkindled by the thought of God's perfections, iv. 176; Sensible and Appreciative, distinguished, iv. 180; superiority of appreciative to sensible love, iv. 184, 185; desires good to God of which He is not possessed, iv. 189; when true

promotes zeal, iv. 191; an incitement to labour, iv. 198; practical suggestions on, iv. 210-220; never idle, iv. 214; omnipotence of, iv. 217; highest act of, is conformity of our wills, iv. 221; consists in deeds not words, iv. 224, 225.
Love of our neighbour, essential to Christian perfection, iv. 296; must rest on supernatural motives, iv. 297; a strict commandment of God, iv. 298, 299-302; the want of, is punished, iv. 300; the origin of all supernatural good, iv. 301; the mark of a Christian, iv. 303; is true charity, iv. 304; the dying command of Christ, iv. 306-308; atones for past sins, iv. 310; prevents sin, iv 311; ensures salvation, iv. 312, 313; must include enemies, iv. 315-317; shown by Christ to His persecutors, iv. 318, *ff.*; degrees of, iv. 328, 329; requires us to forgive injuries, iv 330-334; leads us to suffer insults, iv. 332, 333; destroys rancour, iv. 334; shown in alms-giving, iv. 339-341; shown in ransoming captives, iv. 351, 352; procures forgiveness of sin, iv. 355.
Love and perfection identical, i. 12; of God and of our neighbour is the essence of perfection. i. 12; of God and man not specially distinct, i. 16; brotherly, its necessity illustrated, i. 21; stages of, i. 25; of God for us, shown by spiritual trials, i. 189; increased by vocal prayer, i. 257; of God needs no restraint, ii. 52; of parents and kindred may hinder perfection, ii. 339, *sq.*; for kindred, examples of heroic resistance to, ii. 346; carnal, compared to a fire, ii. 347; its power compared to the magnet, ii. 351; sensible, its progress, ii. 352. *sq.*; sensible, opposed to love of God, ii. 354; when free from danger, ii. 360; of friends, heroically overcome, ii. 413.
Love. *See* FRIENDSHIP.
Low Sunday, iv. 284, 325.
Lucretia, not an instance of the virtue of chastity, iii. 410.
Ludger, St., his zeal for reverence during prayer, i. 269.
Lukewarmness. *See* TEPIDITY.
Lully, Raymond, his foolish love of women turned to the folly of divine love, iii. 120.
Lutgarde, St., anecdote concerning her frequent Communion, i. 432.

Macarius, Abbot, vision showing the nature of distractions in prayer, i. 183; his advice to one in desolation, i. 212; vision of, proving the power of prayer, i. 241; anecdote of his love of chastity, iii. 397.
Macarius, Abbot of Alexandria, means employed by him to preserve chastity, iii. 430.
Macarius, two Saints of the name, their humility in dress, iii. 544.
Machabees, their strength sprang from the sense of God's presence, i. 286; their fortitude, iii. 97.
Machabeus, Judas, prayed prostrate, iii. 201.
Machetes, Abbot, stopped unprofitable conversation by falling asleep, iii. 153.
Madness, often produced by sadness, iii. 337.
Magnanimity, an integral part of fortitude, iii. 381.
Magnet, its power compared to love, ii. 351.
Malachy, St., anecdote of, i. 314.
Man, how distinguished from the brute, iii. 450; how we may put our hopes in, iv. 80; the instrument of God in good. iv. 82, 83; love of God for, iv. 168; less submissive to God than the brutes, iv. 246.
Manareus, F., receives a penance for breach of custody of eyes, ii. 151.
Manasses, saved by misfortune, iv. 259.
Manifestation of conscience. *See* CONSCIENCE.
Manna, a type of the Blessed Eucharist, i. 407.
Manslaughter, three sorts of, ii. 170.
Marcian, the monk, anecdote of, iii. 46.
Margaret of Cortona, Blessed, effects of her General Confession, i. 335.
Margaret, St., Queen of Scotland, heroic humility of, iii. 540.
Marina, St., her heroic meekness, iii. 481.
Marriage, continence in, iii. 148; chastity in, may surpass virginity, iii. 443.
Martha, St., her reverence in prayer, iii. 178.
Martial, St., slays the Emperor Julian, i. 240.
Martin, Monk, resignation of, to the will of God, iv. 291.
Martinianus, his love of chastity, iii. 397.
Martyrdom, once an object of longing, iii. 91; not meritorious apart from obedience, iii. 289; useless without charity, iv. 145.
Martyrius, Monk, his heroic charity, iv. 352.
Martyrs, their peculiar virtue, iii. 91, 103; number of, a motive of credibility, iv. 9; their strength acquired by hope, iv. 107.
Mary, Blessed Virgin, impeccable, i. 10; free from all sin, i. 310; devotion to, a means to acquire perfection, i. 445-90; devotion to, a mark of predestination, i. 446; the second Eve, i. 447; devotion to, conditions on which it leads to salvation, i. 449; extent of her mercy, i. 450; devotion to, reasons for its efficacy, i. 451, *sq.*; her rights as Mother of God, i. 452; why she loves sinners, i. 455; vision showing her mercy, i. 456; devotion to, morally necessary for perfection, i. 457, *sq.*; devotion to, the cause why so many now seek perfection, i. 459; aids us against temptations, i. 463; her power against devils, i. 465; nature of true devotion to, i. 467, *sq.*; the refuge of sinners, i. 470, *sq.*; our Mother, i. 475; exterior acts of homage to, i. 475; interior acts of homage to, i. 476; means to acquire devotion to, i. 478; her mercy illustrated, i. 482; how sinners must turn to her, i. 485; confidence in, recommended, i. 488; punctuality in practices in her honour recommended, i. 490; a pattern of modesty, ii. 146, 149, *sq.*; free from all irregular passions, ii. 223; her worship, iii. 173; power of her intercession, iv. 114.
Mary of Egypt, St., her devotion to Our Lady, i. 461; how much influenced by the thought of God's love for her, iv. 160.
Mary Magdalen, St., her devotion, iii. 217; Feast of, iv. 350.

Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, St., her self-examination, i. 368; her severe penance for her faults, i. 374; how she was taught to practise penance, ii. 66.
Mary of Oignies, Blessed, anecdote of, ii. 17.
Mary, the sister of Moses, punished for murmuring, ii. 172.
Mass, Holy, acts of reverence during, i. 414; reverence of the Angels for, iii. 163, *ff.*; ceremonies of, iii. 169, *ff.*; instances of devout celebration, iii. 187.
Master needed to learn any art, i. 100.
Maud, St., her detachment from wealth, ii. 284.
Maurus, St., remarkable obedience of, iii. 322.
Maximus Valerius, quoted, iii. 55.
Meals, reading during, ii. 111; practical suggestions in connection with, ii. 112; should be taken to support health, iii. 143; not for gratification, iii. 147.
Meals. *See* GLUTTONY.
Meal-times, forestalling, an act of gluttony, ii. 101.
Meaning, attention to, in prayer, i. 260.
Means and ends, iii. 23.
Means of perfection; desire, i. 43-47.
Means to acquire devotion to Our Lady, i. 478, *sq.*
Medard, St., anecdote, iii. 80.
Meditation, a means to keep up desire of perfection, i. 69; the ordinary means of perfection, i. 76; a step to perfection, i. 131; in general, i. 152-212; the second step to perfection, i. 152; springs from reading, i. 152; speculative and practical, i. 153; helps us to observe the Commandments, i. 154; the necessity of it explained, i. 155; often effectual though reluctantly undertaken, i. 156; a necessary means to devotion, i. 159; how essential to religious or spiritual life, i. 160; practised by Christ and the Saints, i. 162; case of those who are unable to practise it, i. 163; act of divine presence should precede, i. 165, *sq.*; act of adoration at commencement, i. 169; requires both our industry and God's grace, i. 170; method of, i. 173; example of the method, i. 175; must lead to resolutions distinct and practical, i. 176; closed with a Colloquy, i. 179; possible to all, i. 180; difficulties in the way of, i. 180, *sq.*; not destroyed by distraction, i. 181; how to be made when distractions come, i. 186; fruitful however arid, i. 187; the necessary means to perfection, i. 196; may be effectual although it be informal, i. 197; not to be lightly abandoned, i. 198; evil results of its casual omission, i. 198; on the passion most powerful against the devil, i. 198; to be suited to the state of each, i. 199, *sq.*; assiduity of the Saints in, i. 201; duration of, i. 202; time suited to, i. 203; not to be omitted because of aridity, i. 210; and prayer, how connected, i. 213; and ejaculatory prayer compared, i. 304; a means to acquire devotion to Our Lady, i. 478; as a cure for faults of the tongue, ii. 214; to be directed to uprooting passion, ii. 251; helps to fortitude, iii. 112; helps to the acquirement of perfect charity, iv. 162.
Meditation. *See* DISTRACTION, PRAYER.
Medium to be observed in food, ii. 87.
Meekness, in what it differs from patience, iii. 444; akin to clemency, iii. 446; its reasonableness, iii. 449, *ff.*; its necessity in bridling anger, iii. 455; its power in subduing passion, iii. 455; the favourite virtue of Christ, iii. 457-459; special virtue of a Christian, iii. 458, 460; necessary for prayer, iii. 463, 465; of the Saints of the Old Law, iii. 468; disarms the anger of others, iii. 470, 474; to enemies, attainable by God's grace, iii. 475; to enemies, attainable by practice, iii. 475; secured by foresight of wrongs, iii. 476; learnt from Christ, iii. 477; acquired by considering our own faults, iii. 479; can avenge the wrongs of others, iii. 487; example of, in a lady, iii. 493.
Melancholic temperament, iii. 42.
Melancholy, cured by hope, iv. 103.
Memory, belongs to counsel, iii. 12; the reason given, iii. 13; a part of prudence, iii. 12, 13.
Mental prayer. *See* PRAYER.
Merchant, example of, teaching watchfulness, ii. 11.
Mercy of Our Lady illustrated, i. 482.
Merit greatest in dry meditations, i. 187; gained by repelling temptation, ii. 385, *ff.*
Methods of cultivating the presence of God, i. 288, *sq.*
Mildness, to be used in punishing inferiors, iii. 491.
Miracle, rash expectation of, i. 98.
Miracles, a motive of credibility, iv. 9.
Mirror, spiritual books compared to, i. 135.
Moderation in food, examples of, ii. 107; supplies the place of fasting in the weak, ii. 108.
Modesty, nature of, ii. 136; virtue of, how to be secured, ii. 136, *sq.*; exterior, a mark of interior regulation, ii. 138; particulars in the practice of, ii. 141, *sq.*; of the eyes, ii. 141; in conversation, ii. 142; in laughter, ii. 143; in gait, ii. 144; must not be hypocritical, ii. 145; Christ and Our Lady patterns of, ii. 146, *sq.*; practical suggestions concerning, ii. 151, *sq.*; in trifles, how important, ii. 152; to be peculiarly cultivated by Priests and Religious, ii. 153; promoted by the use of the Particular Examen, ii. 155; in regard to dress, ii. 156.
Molinos, his condemnation, i. 31; errors of, concerning sensible devotion, iii. 231.
Money, buried with Monk, ii. 290, 291; detachment from, a means to justice, iii. 63, *ff.*
Monica, St., her conversation with her son, ii. 160; how she secured peace with her husband, ii. 243; example of obedience, iii. 265.
Monks, various penances of, ii. 48; great example of temperance in, iii. 129; punishment of drunken and debauched, iii. 139; conversion of one, by gentleness, iii. 152; grievous fall of one, iii. 433.
Moral virtues. *See* VIRTUES.

Moral wrong, is the only evil, iv. 235.
More, Sir Thomas, how he stayed detraction, ii. 189; his devotion at Mass, iii. 188; an example of appreciative love of God, iv. 183.
Mortal sin. *See* SIN.
Mortification, an instrument of perfection, i. 20; of the sense of smell, ii. 183; of the passions, ii. 229, *sq.*; its absolute necessity, ii. 232; must be unceasing, ii. 233, 237; of passions, rules for, ii. 235, *sq.*; of self-will, possible to all, ii. 238; of the passions, practical suggestions on, ii. 250; examples of various, ii. 253; of curiosity, ii. 255, 256; no sin against temperance, iii. 146; positive and negative, iii. 154; of sight, iii. 155; a protection to chastity, iii. 429, 442.
Mortification. *See* PASSIONS.
Moses, sanctified without external direction, i. 93; call of, i. 96; his wonderful docility, iii. 14, 35; his manner of praying when the Israelites fought the Amalekites, iii. 198; his anger and meekness, iii. 484.
Moses, Abbot, on the advantage of suffering, iii. 346.
Mother, Director must be as, to his penitents, i. 127.
Mother, Mary our, i. 475.
Mother of the living, Blessed Virgin Mary is the true, i. 447.
Motives, to desire perfection, i. 48-59; which dispose the mind to faith, iv. 8; which determine our belief, iv. 13; of credibility, should be first weighed in acquiring divine faith, iv. 14.
Murder, Monk led to, i. 103.
Murmuring, its evils, ii. 166, *sq.*; likened by the Saints to murder, ii. 170; punishment of, ii. 172.
Music, devout, an act of worship, iii. 193.

Naaman, bodily illness of, causes the cure of his soul, iv. 260.
Nabuchodonosor, humbled by adversity, iii. 340.
Nativity of Christ an example of poverty, ii. 287.
Natural gifts, should excite us to love of God, iv. 169.
Necessity of the counsels in order to keep the commandments, i. 56; moral, of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 445.
Negligence, a source of desolation, i. 206; a fault by defect against prudence, iii. 19.
Neri, Philip, St., feigned madness through humility, iii. 540.
New Testament, increased use of hair-cloth under the, ii. 34.
Nicephorus, of Antioch, his martyrdom, i. 21; quoted, iii. 54, 333; on the zeal for martyrdom of the early Christians, iv. 24.
Nicholas, St., Bishop, Feast of, iv. 342, 343.
Nicolas, St., Pope, consulted by the Bulgarians on their manner of prayer, iii. 199, 202.
Nieremberg, quoted, iv. 274.
Nivelle, John de, his zeal and charity in hearing Confessions, i. 354.
Novella, John di, his zeal for God's honour, iv. 193.
Novitiate, tepidity after, i. 37.
Nun brought from tepidity to fervour by one meditation, i. 157; punished for gluttony, ii. 73; heroic concealment of spiritual gifts by a, ii. 330.
Nuns under peculiar obligation to modesty, ii. 153; must keep silence, ii. 217; liable to form imperfect attachments, ii. 358.

Oaths, as acts of religion, iii. 192; used to be taken fasting, iii. 192.
Obedience, an instrument of perfection, i. 19; to Director the only hope of the scrupulous, ii. 442; to Director, example set by St. Teresa, ii. 443; a most necessary virtue for human life, iii. 260; ranked under justice, iii. 260; its definition, iii. 261; who are to practise, iii. 262; to superiors, iii. 263; examples of, from Scripture, iii. 263, *ff.*; of children, iii. 264; heroic, of Eustochium to her mother, iii. 264; of wives, iii. 265; of St. Monica, narrated by St. Augustine, iii. 265; of servants, iii. 266; to priests, iii. 267; to authority, necessary for all, iii. 268; not due when sinful, iii. 269; not enjoined in determining a state of life, iii. 269; necessity of, illustrated by the universe, iii. 271; as necessary in the civil world as in the physical, iii. 272; effects of the want of, in society, iii. 272, 273; its necessity seen by comparisons, iii. 273, 274; surpasses all other moral virtues, iii. 276; best offering of man to God, iii. 276; the mother of every virtue, iii. 277; the child and parent of the cardinal virtues, iii 278; examples of, in holy men, iii. 279, *ff.*, 296, 298; lends merit to indifferent actions, iii. 281; essential to the existence of other virtues, iii. 284, *ff.*; superior to religion, iii. 285, *ff.*; renders us invincible by temptation, iii. 291; example of the value of, iii. 292; three degrees of, iii. 294; when against nature, best test of the virtue of, iii. 297, 298; most required in spiritual concerns, iii. 301, 302; second and third degrees, iii. 303, *ff.*; of Peter and Andrew, iii. 305; should be blind when the thing ordered not manifestly sinful, iii. 308, 309; should be joined to cheerfulness, iii. 310; motives of, iii. 312; examples of, iii. 315, 320, *ff.*; leaves no room for delusion, iii. 317; cannot sin, iii. 324, 325; of Jesus Christ an example to us, iii. 326; the surest test of true virtue, iii. 332, 333.
Object of the work, i. 2.
Objections to daily Communion, i. 428.
Objects of prayer, i. 226, *sq.*; of our passions within our power, ii. 247.
Obligation to seek perfection, i. 48-54; of vocal prayer, i. 255, 256.
Obstinacy, ii. 370; in one's own opinion punished, iii. 36.
Occasions of sin, a help to temptation, ii. 406.
Occupation, needless, a hindrance to devotion, iii. 245.
Office of Blessed Virgin Mary, its recital recommended, i. 475.

Old Testament, use of hair-cloth under, ii. 31, *ff.*
Origenistic error, ii. 221.
Origin of faults to be investigated, i. 376.
Osorius, Jerome, martyrdom of Gonsalez Vasquez, related by, iii. 114.

Pachomius, St., his humility, iii. 539; told by God that confidence in Him is the great means of overcoming temptation, iv. 119.
Pæmen, Abbot, his perfect conformity to the will of God, iv. 293.
Pagans, used self-examination, i. 365; saw the value of particular examination, i. 379; none of them possessed heroic virtue, iii. 6; chief heroes among the, iii. 6; the virtuous acts of, commonly infected by some vice, iii. 6; had some virtues, not all, iii. 6; ignorant of the virtue of chastity, iii. 408.
Palladius, anecdote related by, iii. 221; iv. 34, 119.
Palm Sunday, iv. 323, 324.
Pambo, his sense of the difficulty of mastering the tongue, ii. 198.
Paphnutius, St., how led to perfection, i 68; converts Thaïs, i. 281; a model of patience, iii. 365; his heroic humility, iii. 524.
Paralytic man an example of perseverance in prayer, i. 253.
Pardon, ejaculation begging, i. 296.
Parents, love of, may hinder perfection, ii. 339, *sq.*
Particular Examination, subject of, i. 377, 387; how useful a help to advance, i. 378; practice of, i. 380; for whom proper, i. 387; how it may be prejudical, i. 389; as a means to promote modesty, ii. 155.
Paschasius, anecdote of, iii. 36.
Passion, meditation on the, how efficacious, i. 198; meditation on, suited to all, i. 200; an impediment to sound direction, iii. 39; often assists reason, iii. 93.
Passions, predominant, i. 377, 387; repressed by Communion, i. 400; hinder perfection, ii. 2; all dependent on the imagination, ii. 119; minor, regulated by modesty, ii. 136, *ff.*; classified, ii. 219; as a hindrance to perfection, ii. 219, *sq.*; never cease to disturb us, ii. 221, *sq.*; not necessarily bad, ii. 222; mortification of, ii. 229, *sq.*; never wholly dead, ii. 233, 237; predominant, to be first attacked, ii. 235, *sq.*; to be attacked in their beginnings, ii. 239; easily overcome if attacked at once, ii. 240; must be directed to worthy objects, ii. 247; controlled by conformity to God's will, ii. 249; to be uprooted by mortification, &c., ii. 251.
Passions. *See* MORTIFICATION.
Passion Sunday, iv. 282, 322.
Patience, how necessary for Directors, i. 127; in what it consists, iii. 335; an antidote to sadness, iii. 337; acquired by looking upon Christ, iii. 347, *ff.*; of Christ, was strength to the Saints, iii. 352; of Job, iii. 356; the fruit of hope, iii. 357; of a leper, iii. 358; motives of, iii. 339-360; examples of in the Saints, iii. 362, *ff.*; under temporal losses, examples of, iii. 362, 363; examples of, under loss of honour, iii. 364-366; examples of, under insult, iii. 367; examples of, under illness, iii. 368, 369; examples of, in the death of friends, iii. 370; examples of, under spiritual affliction, iii. 373; its perfection acquired by God's help, iii. 374; first degree, to keep an outward calm, iii. 375; second degree, calmness of heart, iii. 376; third degree, to rejoice in trials, iii. 378; of a disciple of St. Dominic, iii. 380; a part of fortitude, iii. 381; renders grief bearable, iii. 381; acquired by prayer, iii. 382; assisted by foresight of evils, iii. 383; lost by brooding over present evils, iii. 384; how it differs from meekness, iii. 444; short-lived if hope is absent, iv. 120.
Patriarchs, their use of the presence of God, i. 275.
Patrick, St., his assiduity in worship, iii. 178.
Paul, St., his high sanctity, i. 63; on constant progress in perfection, i. 63; on the means to make unceasing progress, i. 71-73; on the dangers of tepidity, i. 88; call of, i. 97; his submission to St. Peter, i. 97; his penance, ii. 22; his prayer to be freed from temptation, ii. 379; would not act without taking counsel, iii. 40; was deprived of sensible devotion, iii. 227; accustomed to desolation of spirit, iii. 227; on the necessity of purity, iii. 395, 396; on the hope of reward, iii. 355; his patience under temptations of the flesh, iii. 373; his joy in tribulation, iii. 378; means employed by him to preserve chastity, iii. 429; exhorts to meekness by example of Christ, iii. 458; his zeal, iv. 196; on the dignity of brotherly love, iv. 311; on fraternal correction, iv. 372, 373, 376.
Paul the Hermit, i. 98.
Paul, the Simple, his great docility, i. 102; source of his holiness, ii. 253; great obedience of, iii. 281.
Paula, St., somewhat too obstinate in the use of penance, ii. 59; her great temperance, iii. 150; a model of patience, iii. 368; her great meekness, iv. 332; her charity to the poor, iv. 350.
Paulinus, St., heroic charity of, iv. 352.
Paz, Alvarez de, on Christ's prayer in His Agony, iii. 226; on the devotion of Jesus Christ, iii. 226; on the necessity of striving to acquire devotion, iii. 229.
Pazzi, Mary Magdalen de, St., violence of her passions, i. 38 (*See* MARY); her patience under temptation, iii. 373; her love of suffering for Christ, iv. 218.
Peace in families, how much promoted by silence, ii. 243; uninterrupted not to be expected in this life, ii. 372; lost if justice be violated, iii. 57, *ff.*
Pelagian heresy, i. 215.
Pelagius, martyr to chastity, iii. 394.
Penance, reason of need of, ii. 21; different kinds of, ii. 29, *ff.*; by use of hair-cloth, ii. 31, *ff.*; extraordinary instruments of, ii. 36; discretion in the use of, ii. 36, 40, 49, *ff.*; by curtailment of sleep, ii. 37, *ff.*;

by endurance of cold and heat, ii. 40; by use of discipline, ii. 41, *ff.*; no hindrance to long life, ii. 49; must not injure health, nor unfit us for our duties, ii. 51; if immoderate, displeases God, ii. 53; ill effects of excessive, ii 56, 57; devil inspires excessive, ii. 57; rule in measuring, ii. 58; to be regulated by age and condition, ii. 61, *ff.*; chain an instrument of, ii. 63; affecting sleep, ii. 64; cases of extraordinary, how dealt with, ii. 65; bodily, never to be used without leave, ii. 66; exterior must be accompanied with interior, ii. 67; to curb the tongue, ii. 215; imprudently practised ruins the soul, ii. 237; and restitution, how distinguished, iii. 74; protects purity, iii. 428, 429, 442.

Penance, Sacrament of, priest should have special preference for, iv. 386; affords most opportunites for practising virtue, iv. 386.

Penance. *See* Austerity.

Penances, examples of, i. 375.

Penitence, two sorts of, internal and external, i. 342, *sq.*

Penitent must disclose his whole interior, i. 115.

Penitent. *See* Director.

Penitents, their infirmities try the patience of Confessors, i. 127; prison for, ii. 47; frequently have false ideas about the sin of injustice, iii. 73; easily blinded concerning the obligation of making restitution, iii. 74; excuses alleged not to be readily received, iii. 75; how should make restitution, iii. 77; must be removed from occasions of sin, iii. 151; should not be irregular in their devotions, iii. 196; should be practised in obedience, but discreetly. iii. 329, 330; should be sincere in manifesting temptations against purity, iii. 441; must with blind faith obey directors, iv. 60; often appear to be perfect, when have scarcely begun the spiritual life, iv. 390, 391.

Pentecost, Second Sunday after, iv. 293, 294; Third Sunday after, iv. 294, 330; Fourth Sunday after, iv. 295, 296; Fifth Sunday after, iv. 330, 331; Sixth Sunday after, iv. 296, 331; Seventh Sunday after, iv. 297, 332; Eighth Sunday after, iv. 298; Ninth Sunday after, iv. 299, 333; Tenth Sunday after, iv. 299, 333; Eleventh Sunday after, iv. 300, 301; Twelfth Sunday after, iv. 301, 302; Thirteenth Sunday after, iv. 334, 335; Fourteenth Sunday after, iv. 302, 335; Fifteenth Sunday after, iv. 303, 304; Sixteenth Sunday after, iv. 336, 337; Seventeenth Sunday after, iv. 304, 337; Eighteenth Sunday after, iv. 305, 306; Nineteenth Sunday after, iv. 306, 307; Twentieth Sunday after, iv. 338; Twenty-first Sunday after, iv. 308; Twenty-second Sunday after, iv. 309, 339; Twenty-third Sunday after, iv. 310, 340; Twenty-fourth Sunday after, iv. 340, 341.

Perfect, the, subjects of their meditations, i. 199.

Perfection, essential and instrumental, i. 10, 28; absolute, is unattainable, i. 10; of this world true, though not absolute, i. 11; defined by St. Thomas and St. Augustine, i. 12; the fulfilment of the law, i. 12; is essentially the love of God and of our neighbour, i. 12; of natural objects, i. 13; in the arts, i. 13; is constituted by the moral virtues and the counsels, i. 18-27; instruments of, i. 19; essential and accidental, i. 20; in works of art, i. 23; the work of, contrasted with material building, i. 29; three degrees of, i. 30; of this life does not imply sinlessness, i. 39; progress in, always possible, i. 41; must be suited to the state of each, i. 42; desire of, i. 43-91; means of, desire, i. 43-47; motives to desire it, i. 48-59; all are bound to seek it, i. 48-54; does not belong to Religious only, i. 52; to be sought in all states of life, doctrine of the Apostles, i. 53; desire of it often necessary for salvation. i. 55; Blessed Suso's vision of nine degrees, i. 57; desire of, i. 60-74; desire of. necessary for advance, i. 60; always admits of increase, i. 61; constant advance in, necessary, i. 66; desires of, how maintained, i. 69-74; earliest steps to, i. 75; the mention of, sometimes frightens, i. 77; not the same in all, i. 78, 79; a work of time, i. 79; not to be learned without a teacher, i. 100; four steps to, from St. Bernard, i. 131; meditation the second step to, i. 152; not to be attained without prayer, i. 224; presence of God a means to, i. 272, *sq.*; sacramental Confession a means to, i. 308, *sq.*; to be gained in hearing Confessions, i. 353; examination of conscience a means to, i. 355, *sq.*; demands the absence of the smallest sins, i. 371; compared to a tower, i. 378; Communion a means to attain, i. 390, *sq.*; devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary a means to acquire, i. 445-90; devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary morally necessary for, i. 457, *sq.*; more commonly sought now than of old, i. 459; hindrances to. Treatise II. *See* Hindrance; compared to fortress, ii. 1; though interior, does not dispense with exterior observances, ii. 60; does not consist in austerities, ii. 116; sight as an obstacle to, ii. 118; often stopped through free use of the eyes, ii. 151; obstacles to, in women, ii. 156; passions a hindrance to, ii. 219, 227; sometimes helped by the passions, ii. 224; seldom attained, ii. 250; mistakes as to its nature common, ii. 250; hindered by riches, ii. 257, &c., 272; hopeless without mortification, ii. 282; ambition and vainglory opposed to, ii. 303, &c.; vainglory opposed to, ii. 307, &c., 313, &c.; hindered by love of parents and kindred, ii. 339, *sq.*; hindered by the outward attacks of the devil, ii. 367, *sq.*; hindered by scruples, ii. 433, *ff.*; of poverty. *See* Poverty; immediate disposition for, iii. 1, *ff.*; obstacles to, overcome by hope, iv. 106; consists in love of God and of our neighbour, iv. 134.

Perfections of God, surpass our conceptions, iv. 166; excite our love, iv. 173, *ff.*

Perfumes, excessive fondness for them punished, ii. 182.
Perseverance in prayer in spite of aridity, i. 187; in grace, not to be merited, but surely obtained by prayer, i. 239; in prayer, necessary, i. 245, 251, *sq.*; a great mark of fortitude, iii. 101; an integral part of fortitude, iii. 381; supports us in grief, iii. 381; St. Thomas' definition of, iii. 381.
Peter, St., his over-confidence, ii. 381; on imitating the fortitude of Christ, iii. 112; on the patience of Christ, iii. 347; on the dignity of brotherly love, iv. 310.
Peter of Alcantara, St., his scanty sleep, ii. 37; his endurance of cold, ii. 40; his custody of his eyes, ii. 130; his great abstinence, iii. 145.
Peter Damian, St., on the constant presence of Our Lord, i. 284; on the privileges of the Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 452; first promoter of use of discipline, ii. 43.
Petition as an act of worship, iii. 180.
Pharisee and publican, where their prayers differed, i. 250.
Philip and James, SS., Apostles, Feast of, iv. 349.
Philip Neri, St., his abhorrence of singularity, ii. 114; on flight from certain temptations, ii. 413.
Philosopher, a pagan, conversion of, at the council of Nicæa, iv. 384.
Philosophers, pagan, their idea of chastity, iii. 408.
Phlegmatic temperament, iii. 43.
Physical evils, not real evils, iv. 235.
Physician, God compared to a, ii. 19.
Piamon, St., vision illustrating the dispositions needed for Holy Communion, i. 411.
Piety, a part of the virtue of justice, iii. 334.
Pilgrimages, acts of Worship, iii. 193.
Plan of the work, i. 28.
Plato, his want of appreciation of chastity, iii. 408.
Pleasure in food not necessarily sinful, ii. 72.
Plutarch recommends the particular examination, i. 379; relates fortitude of Agesilaus, iii. 336; anecdote related by, iii. 490.
Poison, vainglory a, ii. 307.
Ponte, Louis de, exorcising, i. 111.
Possidius, on the chastity of St. Augustine, iii. 423, 427.
Potamenia, her love of chastity, iii. 399.
Poverty an instrument of perfection, i. 19; voluntary, recommended, ii. 274; of spirit, how to be attained, ii. 280, *sq.*; of early Christians, ii. 281; vowed by the Apostles, ii. 282; of spirit, attainable by all, ii. 283; of spirit, practical suggestions concerning, ii. 286; of Christ an incentive to the spirit of poverty, ii. 287; substance and perfection of, ii. 289, 292; twofold sin in a violation of, ii. 290; grievousness of the obligation of Religious, ii. 290, 291; of spirit, ii. 295; of Religious, cannot be dispensed by Confessor, ii. 296.
Practical suggestions: stages of spiritual life, i. 37-42; desire of perfection, i. 75-80; means to keep alive desire of perfection, i. 81-91; qualities needed in dealing with penitents, i. 121-29; spiritual reading, i. 144-51; meditation, i. 196-203; aridity and consolation, i. 204-12; vocal prayer, i. 264-71; presence of God, i. 303-7; sacramental Confession, i. 337-43; examination of conscience, i. 384-9; frequency of Communion, i. 433-40; devotion to Our Lady, i. 485; bodily penances, ii. 60-7; fasting and taking food, ii. 112-27; modesty and custody of eyes, ii. 151-7; control of the hearing, ii. 185-94; guard of the tongue, ii. 213-18; mortification of the passions, ii. 250-6; detachment from riches, ii. 286-96; vainglory, ii. 330-8; friendships, ii. 360-6; temptations, ii. 407-20; scruples, ii. 458-67; on violations of justice, iii. 72-84; on fortitude, iii. 118-123; on temperance, iii. 150-156; on methods of honouring God, iii. 194-208; on true devotion, iii. 254-260; on obedience, iii. 328-334; on the virtue of patience, iii. 382-386; for preserving chastity, iii. 438-443; against anger, iii. 483-494; on humility, iii. 561-570; on the virtue of faith, iv. 55-60; on the practice of hope, iv. 122-132; on the love of God, iv. 210-220; on conformity to the will of God, iv. 289-295.
Praise, our own, easily incites us to pride, iii. 522.
Praise, as an act of worship, iii. 179; a kind of sacrifice, iii. 190.
Prayer, ejaculatory. *See* EJACULATION.
Prayer for hardened sinners, how necessary i. 126; a step to perfection, i. 131; mental, consists of meditation and contemplation, i. 153; should be humble, confiding, and ardent, i. 179; not destroyed by distraction, i. 181; of Christ in the garden meritorious in spite of aridity, i. 187; temptations in time of, i. 192, *sq.*; mental and vocal, i. 213-71; defined, i. 213; vocal and mental distinguished, i. 213; absolute necessity of, i. 214; two reasons for this, i. 215; the ordinary means of gaining grace, i. 216; when of obligation, i. 217; recommended in Scripture, i. 220; hindered by the devil, i. 222, 223; the necessary means of perfection, i. 224; objects of, i. 226, *sq.*; for temporal favours should be conditional, i. 229; intercessory, i. 230, *sq.*; to be continued after sin, i. 235; power of, i. 236, *sq.*; insures perseverance in grace, i. 239; how availing, i. 240, 241; its conditions, i. 244, *sq.*; faith needed for, i. 245, *sq.*; vocal, i. 255, *sq.*; vocal, must be heartfelt, i. 258; inattentive, earns punishment, i. 262; vocal, practical hints on, i. 264, *sq.*; a universal remedy, i. 264; never hindered by true humility, i. 265; vocal, for whom most suitable, i. 266; does not require many words, i. 267; posture during, i. 269; vocal, sometimes replaced by a higher kind, i. 271; assisted by the presence of God, i. 272; unceasing, in what sense possible to all, i. 305; for knowledge of sin the second act of examination of conscience, i. 370; concluding examination of conscience, i. 377; a means of resisting temptation, ii. 394, *ff.*; helped by custody of eyes, ii. 134;

the first means to bridle the tongue, ii. 201; the first remedy against vainglory, ii. 319; a specific against scruples, ii. 441; vocal, scruples regarding, ii. 467; the first means to acquire prudence, iii. 29; the first means to acquire fortitude, iii. 108; as an act of worship, iii. 180; instances of assiduous, iii. 181; assiduity in, of Egyptian monk, iii. 181; constant, of the Saints, iii. 181; a kind of Sacrifice, iii. 190; helped by outward acts of worship, iii. 195; anciently practised standing, on Sunday, iii. 197; with joined hands, iii. 198; with the hands stretched out, iii. 200; prostrate on the ground, iii. 201; with striking of the breast, iii. 202; with uplifted eyes, iii. 203; with eyes downcast, iii. 203; with the face to the East, iii. 204; incompatible with cares, iii. 251; not to be preferred to obedience, iii. 302; examples of the power of, in affliction, iii. 382; necessary to preserve chastity, iii. 424; of special necessity in temptation to impurity, iii. 436; necessity of, for acquiring faith, iv. 35; must be guided by faith, iv. 44; need not be attended by sensible sweetness, iv. 46; dryness in, common to the Saints, iv. 70; may be made for temporal blessings, iv. 60; must be full of hope, iv. 111.

Prayer, mental. *See* MEDITATION.

Prayer. *See* MEDITATION.

Preaching, little dreaded by the devil, i. 111; a great means of exercising zeal for souls, iv. 381.

Precepts, negative, always binding, iii. 79.

Precipitation, produces improvidence, iii. 19; a vice opposed to counsel, iii. 19.

Predestination, devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary a mark of, i. 446. *See* MARY.

Preparation for meditation, i. 164, *sq.*

Presence of God, act of before meditation, i. 165; act of, a good remedy for distraction, i. 185; act of, before vocal prayer, i. 258; in general, i. 272-307; acts of, a source of devotion, iii. 249.

Presence of God. *See* GOD.

Presents tend to foster imperfect attachments, ii. 365.

Presumption, ii. 310; opposed to hope, iv. 85.

Pride, fed by sensible devotion, i. 188; fed by fasting, ii. 114; whether a capital sin, ii. 310; fear of, no ground to omit good works, ii. 336; the destruction of chastity, iii. 431, 432; the ruin of Lucifer, iii. 551; the greatest obstacle to God's grace, iii. 553, 554.

Priesthood, its dignity, iii. 187.

Priests, under peculiar obligation to modesty, ii. 153; obedience to, in Confession, iv. 47; are feeders of the flock of Christ, iv. 380, 381; must labour for the salvation of souls, iv. 382; want of zeal in, iv. 382; should be filled with zeal and charity, iv. 383; bound to acquire requisite knowledge, iv. 383; are the appointed ministers of the Sacraments, iv. 386; should have special preference for Sacramental Confession, iv. 386.

Princes claim homage without ambition, ii. 300.

Prison, remarkable conversion in, i. 69.

Privations arising from poverty to be endured, ii. 294.

Privileges of the scrupulous, ii. 452, *ff.*

Processions, acts of worship, iii. 193.

Prodigal Son, converted by adversity, iii. 340.

Proficients, passions of, sometimes increase in violence, i. 38; subjects of their meditations, i. 199.

Progress in perfection always possible, i. 41; a necessary condition of perfection, i. 74

Property, must soon be parted with, iii. 66.

Prophecy, a motive of credibility, iv. 8.

Prosper, St., on the virtue of fortitude, iii. 87; on the praises of temperance, iii. 141.

Prosperity, temporal, often the result of afflictions, iv. 256.

Prostration, an act of religion, iii. 174.

Prudence, perfect when looks to God alone in every action, iii. 3; office of, iii. 10; defined by Aristotle, iii. 10; and by St. Augustine, iii. 10; by the author, iii. 10; a virtue of the intellect, not of the will, iii. 10; directs all the other virtues, iii. 10; judges which virtues are most fitting in various circumstances, iii. 10; commands the will, iii. 10; is concerned with particular actions, iii. 10; St. Thomas distinguishes three parts in, iii. 11; Lessius on the virtue of, iii. 11; illustration of, in conversion of sinner, iii. 11; counsel, the first part of, iii. 11; judgment, the second part of, iii. 11; command, the third and principal part of, iii. 11; intelligence, a part of, iii. 12, 13; eight integral parts of, iii. 12; St. Ambrose quoted on, iii. 13; solitary, regulates our own actions, iii. 18; governing, regulates the actions of others, iii. 18; economic, regulates families, iii. 18; political, rules cities, iii. 18; military, regulates military matters, iii. 18; monastic, has to do with government of religious communities, iii. 18; natural and supernatural, defined, iii. 18; supernatural, directs the sanctifying virtues, iii. 18; natural, possessed by heathen philosophers, iii. 18; frequently found in persons outside the Church, iii. 18; faults against this virtue, iii. 19, 20; carnal, iii. 20; faults against, committed by excess in six ways, iii. 20; importance of, iii. 24; essential to justice, iii. 24; moderates all the virtues, iii. 25; St. Basil on importance of, iii. 26; is the most necessary virtue, iii. 27, 28; means to acquire, iii. 29-36; peculiarly needful to Directors, iii. 37; practical suggestions on, iii. 37-47; a cardinal virtue, iii. 86.

Psalmody, the food of the soul, iii. 129; an act of worship, iii. 193.

Psalms, full of acts of praise, iii. 179.

Ptolemais, nuns of, their love of chastity, iii. 402.

Ptolemy of Cyprus, anecdote of, ii. 278.

Punishment of inattentive prayer, i. 262; of slight transgressions, very severe, iv. 287.

Pure intention. *See* INTENTION.

Purgation of sense, passive, i. 38.

Purgative virtues, iii. 3. *See* VIRTUES.

Purgative way, i. 31; meditations suitable for, i. 199.
Purification of Our Lady, Feast of, iv. 349.
Purity, two kinds of, i. 309; of heart, acquired by Confession, i. 309; obtained especially by General Confession, i. 334; endangered by gluttony, ii. 82; of intention, ii. 326; of heart gained by scruples, ii. 429.
Purpose of amendment, the fifth act of examination of conscience, i. 375.
Pythagoras prescribed self-examination, i. 365.

Quality of food to be regulated, ii. 103.
Quantity of food to be regulated, ii. 106.
Quarrels, ii. 310.
Quinquagesima Sunday, iv. 278, 320.

Race, life compared to a, ii. 387.
Rashness, distinguished from boldness, iii. 121.
Raymond of Pisa, Blessed, his conversion, ii. 160.
Reading, spiritual, i. 131-51; St. Bernard, on, i. 131; a banquet suited to all, i. 138, *sq.*; its power in working conversions, i. 139; no less needed than prayer, i. 141; distinguished from study, i. 144; disposition to profit by, i. 145; should be leisurely, i. 147; introduces to meditation, i. 152; a means to acquire devotion to Our Lady, i. 478; public, during meals recommended, ii. 111.
Reason, teaches that perfection is to be found in love, i. 13; the mistress of the soul, i. 357; a part of prudence, iii. 12-16; belongs to counsel, iii. 12; St. Thomas upon, iii. 16; ruined by intemperance, iii. 132; distinguishes man from the brute, iii. 450; upset by anger, iii. 451; unaided, incapable of an act of divine faith, iv. 6.
Reasons for necessity of direction, i. 100, *sq.*
Recollection, examples of, ii. 135.
Recompense to be sought in toiling for others, i. 9.
Recreation the devil's harvest-time, ii. 204; need of, iii. 47.
Redemption, a motive of conformity to God's will, iv. 247.
Reflection, to be practised by Directors, iii. 40.
Refuge of sinners, Our Lady, i. 470, *sq.*
Reguera, his doctrine on the duty to seek perfection, i. 54.
Relapses prevented by Confession, i. 313; into sin, a reason for Communion, i. 433.
Relations, love of, ii. 339, *sq.*
Relics, veneration of, an act of religion, iii. 193.
Religion, the virtue of, iii. 157, *ff.*; defined, iii. 158; the first of moral virtues, iii. 160; a virtue of the Angels, iii. 163; inward, 165, *ff.*; acts of, iii. 165-181; outward, 168, *ff.*; practical suggestions on the virtue, iii. 194, *ff.*; virtue of, exists not without obedience, iii. 284; Christian, its growth a proof of the truths of faith, iv. 9.
Religious, how peculiarly bound to seek perfection, i. 49; seek perfection by means of their vows and rules, i. 50; strictly bound to observe their rules, i. 51; especially bound to meditation, i. 196; under peculiar obligations to modesty, ii. 153, 154; their silence, ii. 216; bound to strict poverty, ii. 289; sometimes desire dignities, ii. 306; poverty cannot be dispensed by Confessor, ii. 298; state, an advantage of the, i. 300; life, not security against imperfect attachments, ii. 355; some easily disheartened in absence of sensible fervour, iii. 256; a special obligation of obedience in, iii. 268.
Reluctance does not destroy efficacy of meditation, i. 156.
Remedy for distractions, i. 185.
Remedies against excesses in the use of touch, ii. 12, *ff.*; often worse than the disease, ii. 93; against vainglory, ii. 319, *sq.*, 326, *sq.*; for scruples, ii. 441, *f.*
Remigius, St., anecdote of, iii. 172; remarkable patience of, iii. 362.
Remote preparation for meditation, i. 164.
Remunerative justice. *See* JUSTICE.
Renewal of spirit, how useful, i. 70.
Repletion, we must never eat to, ii. 106.
Repentance, when effectual, i. 319.
Reprimand of Director the beginning of sanctity, i. 76.
Reserve in speech recommended, ii. 210.
Resignation. *See* CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD, iii. 272.
Resolutions, how formed, i. 155; to be formed in meditation, i. 176; must descend to particulars, i. 178; of amendment, i. 375; to bridle the tongue must be detailed, ii. 205, *sq.*; not to be made in time of temptation, ii. 419.
Respect, human, must not be allowed to lead us to encourage detraction, ii. 180; human, to be shunned by Directors, iii. 39
Restitution, necessity of, iii. 74, *ff.*; does not readily admit excuses, iii. 75; manner of, iii. 77; not often made fully, iii. 79; enforced by a miracle, iii. 80; must be of goods of the same order, iii. 81, *ff.*; promises to make, often untrustworthy, iii. 84.
Retirement, daily time of, ii. 212; example of, in a virgin, iii. 425.
Revenge, temptation to, how met, ii. 409.
Reverence resulting from act of divine presence, i. 166; for Mass, and for the Blessed Sacrament, i. 414, *sq.*; during prayer, iii. 194; required for success of, iii. 195; inculcated by the Church in beginning the Divine Office, iii. 195.
Reward of prompt obedience, iii. 302; hope of, is no part of perfect charity, iv. 138.
Ribadeneira, F., anecdote of, i. 35; quoted, iii. 197.
Rich always bound to almsgiving, ii. 289.
Riches. *See* COVETOUSNESS.
Riches a hindrance to perfection, ii. 257, &c.; compared to thorns, ii. 259; cares that accompany, ii. 260, *sq.*; despised even by pagans, ii. 263, *sq.*; as a hindrance to perfection, ii. 272; St. Ignatius Loyola, and St. Gregory on detachment from, ii. 273, 274; attachment to, hard of discovery, ii. 277; example of inordinate attachment to,

ii. 278 : detachment from, practical suggestions, ii. 286.
Rio, Del, Martin, relates punishment of three lecherous monks, iii. 139.
Ritual, value of, iii. 169, *ff.*
Robert, St., anecdote of, i. 259.
Rogation Sunday, iv. 327, 328.
Romuald, St., the influence of his presence, i. 283 ; a model of patience, iii. 366, 367.
Romula, St., model of patience, iii. 368.
Rosary, suggestion for its devout recital, i. 262 ; recommended, i. 475.
Rose of Lima, St., her great penance, ii. 36, 37, *sq.*
Rosignoli, F., quoted, iv. 45.
Rufinus, on the excellence of faith, iv. 33.
Rules of Religious, their means to seek perfection, i. 50; breach of, by Religious, how far sinful, i. 51.

Sackcloth, the garb of the humiliation, ii. 31, 32.
Sacramental Confession. *See* CONFESSION.
Sacrament of the altar. *See* COMMUNION.
Sacraments robbed of their effect by scruples, ii. 435 ; frequentation of, in trouble, iii. 385 ; are food to the soul, iv. 381 ; conferring of, great means of exercising zeal, iv. 386.
Sacrifice, why sometimes unacceptable, iii. 167; a chief act of religion, iii. 182 ; chief act of worship of barbarous tribes, iii. 182 ; its nature, iii. 183 ; must be offering of some visible object, iii. 183 ; meaning of the term, iii. 183 ; must be made in protestation of God's excellence, iii. 184 ; reserved to God alone, iii. 185 ; under the Old and New Law, iii. 186.
Sacrifices demanded by God, ii. 377.
Sacrilege induced by covetousness, ii. 268.
Sacrilegious Confession, i. 331.
Sadness, awakened by evil experienced, iii. 335 ; most harmful to soul and body, iii. 337 ; a sure sign of want of resignation, iv. 295.
"Safer course" for the scrupulous ; what is ? ii. 454.
Saints, all, practised meditation, i. 162 ; how Confessors may become, i. 353 ; devotion to, a means to acquire perfection, i. 445 ; all devout to Our Lady, i. 460 ; their fear of vainglory, ii. 312, 316, *sq.* ; Sacrifice in their honour, iii. 185 ; their dryness in prayer, iv. 60 ; their neglect of temporal blessings, iv. 71.
Salo, Simon, his practice of the presence of God, i. 29.
Salvation to be sought through perfection, i. 55-59 ; obtained by means of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 445, *sq.* ; when, on what conditions, attained by devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, i. 449 ; endangered by covetousness, ii. 266, *sq.* ; secured by keeping the commandments, iv. 72.
Samaria, terrible incident at the siege of, ii. 32.
Samson, ruined by want of prudence, iii. 30.
Samuel, call of, i. 96
Sanctifying grace. *See* GRACE.
Sanctity of Christian law, a proof of the truths of faith, iv. 8.
Sanguine temperament, iii. 44.
Sapricius of Antioch loses the crown of martyrdom, i. 21.
Sarah, anecdote of her, ii. 383.
Satan. *See* DEVIL.
Satan puts snares in the path of perfection, i. 57.
Saura, Fr., Diego de, his vow to seek after perfection, iv. 229, *ff.*
Scævola, not a hero of fortitude, iii. 104.
Scourging, ii. 41, 42 ; scourging of Christ, an example of meditation upon, i. 175.
Scruple. *See* SCRUPULOUS.
Scruples hinder perfection, ii. 2 ; in general, ii. 421, *ff.* ; false and true notion of, ii. 422 ; occasions of, ii. 424, *ff.* ; natural and diabolic, how distinguished, ii. 427 ; uses of, ii. 429 ; hinder perfection, ii. 433, *ff.* ; destroy hope, ii. 437, *ff.* ; remedies for, ii. 441, *ff.* ; prayer a specific for, ii. 441 ; practical suggestions in general, ii. 458-67 ; various objects of, ii. 461, *ff.*
Scrupulous persons must not make general confession, i. 331 ; how known, ii. 432 ; obedience their only hope, ii. 442 ; cannot judge aright, ii. 444 ; should cultivate hope, ii. 449 ; what they must avoid, ii. 450 ; their privileges, ii. 452, *ff.* ; bound to act against their scruples, ii. 453 ; what confessions they ought to make, ii. 453 ; difficulties raised by, ii. 454, *ff.* ; need not fear internal sin, ii. 455 ; must not examine themselves, ii. 457.
Scripture, Holy, knowledge of it needed by a Director, i. 109 ; St. Jerome on the reading of, i. 133.
Scurrility an effect of gluttony, ii. 81.
Sebastian and Fabian, SS., Martyrs, Feasts of, iv. 344, 345.
Sections of the work, to whom chiefly addressed, i. 36.
Seculars bound to seek perfection, i. 52.
Segneri, heroic instance of charity, recorded by, iv. 337.
Self, a never-ending study, iii. 564.
Self-complacency, the sin of, iii. 522.
Self-denial in things lawful recommended, ii. 254, *sq.* ; examples of, ii. 255, 256 ; required to uproot faults, iv. 155 ; continual, necessary for perfect charity, iv. 159 ; of St. Mary of Egypt, iv. 160 ; sweetness to be found in, iv. 161.
Self-interest, a motive of conformity to God's will, iv. 253, *ff.*
Self-knowledge, need of prayer for, i. 370.
Self-love fed by sensible devotion, i. 188 ; its delusions, i. 370 ; an enemy to prudence, iii. 34 ; an enemy to divine love, iv. 152 ; darkens the mind, iv. 153 ; must be destroyed before divine love enters the soul, iv. 154 ; extinct where there is perfect charity, iv. 155 ; various effects of, iv. 156, 157 ; must be resisted in slight matters, iv. 158.
Seneca, his advice to Lucilius, i. 283 ; on occasions of sin, ii. 406 ; knew the advantage of prudence, iii. 28 ; his false doctrine, iii.

93 ; on gratitude, iii. 334 ; on the advantage of trials, iii. 345 ; on the usefulness of forecasting trials, iii. 383 ; how hope differs from confidence, iv. 3 ; relates meekness of Marcus Cato, and Aristides, iv. 331.
Sense, passive purgation of, i. 38 ; rebellion of, a blemish in virtue, iii. 4.
Senses, daily examination of our, i. 357 ; give the soul the elements of knowledge, ii. 4 ; interior and exterior, hindrances to perfection, ii. 24 ; all to be guided by temperance, iii. 149, 153.
Sensible devotion, to be desired, iii. 231 ; not necessary in prayer, iv. 46 ; to be received with humility, iv. 49.
Sensible emotions, are not true charity, iv. 212.
Sensible image. *See* IMAGE.
Sensible love of God, how distinguished from Appreciative, iv. 180 ; an accidental property of charity, iv. 180-211 ; how produced, iv. 210 ; may be an acquired habit, iv. 211 ; no measure of true charity, iv. 211.
Sensuality. *See* IMPURITY and INTEMPERANCE.
Sentiment, no proof of love, iv. 225, 226.
Separation a cure for imperfect attachments, ii. 364.
Septuagesima Sunday, iv. 277.
Seraphim, their worship of God, iii. 175.
Serapion discloses his temptation, and is freed, i. 118 ; his anthropomorphism, i. 169.
Sermon the beginning of a life of sanctity, i. 76.
Sermons recommended, ii. 162 ; should be simple in language, iv. 385.
Severity out of place in a Director, i. 121.
Severus, Alexander, Emperor, aware of the value of justice, iii. 54 ; instance of his excessive anger, iii. 488.
Severus, Sulpicius, Dialogues of, quoted, iii. 71 ; prodigy of obedience recorded by, iii. 282 ; records remarkable obedience of a monk, iii. 321 ; records the love of chastity of a holy maiden, iii. 425 ; on the humility of an anchorite, iii. 517.
Sexagesima Sunday, iv. 278, 320.
Sex, care in dealing with the opposite, ii. 12, *ff.*
Shame must not hinder us from Confession, i. 326, *sq.*
Ship, soul compared to, i. 362.
Shrew, cure of a, i. 314.
Sickness, no hindrance to the presence of God, i. 303.
Signs of an imperfect friendship, ii. 362, *sq.*
Sight. *See* EYES.
Sight, sense of, as an obstacle to perfection, ii. 118 ; special character of, ii. 118.
Silence a means to curb the tongue, ii. 208, *sq.* ; and speech, each has its due season, ii. 208 ; times of absolute, recommended to all, ii. 212 ; practical suggestions on, ii. 213, *sq.* ; in Religious, ii. 216 ; examples of, ii. 216 ; of seculars, ii. 218 ; often insures peace, ii. 243 ; extravagant love of, ii. 415, 439.
Silvanus, comedian, his profound humility, iii. 499, 500.
Simeon, Stylites, his use of genuflections, iii. 178 ; perfect obedience of, iii. 333.
Simon Salo, St., feigned madness through humility, iii. 540.
Simplicity, a quality of faith, iv. 18.
Sin in contempt of perfection, i. 54 ; venial, leads to mortal, i. 58 ; thought of past, a means of advance, i. 74 ; mortal, meditation a safeguard against, i. 156 ; no reason to desist from prayer, i. 235 ; forgotten in Confession, i. 332 ; two kinds of Confession to cancel, i. 355 ; serious, avoided by help of daily examination, i. 358 ; the smallest, a serious hindrance on the road to perfection, i. 371 ; grievous, against religious poverty, ii. 291 ; altogether our own, ii. 322 ; none in acting against scruples, ii. 453 ; internal, the scrupulous need not fear, ii. 455 ; of past life an object of scruples, ii. 461 ; grievous in one seeking perfection, iii. 151 ; not to be committed through obedience, iii. 269 ; the only thing we can call our own, iii. 505, 529 ; worse than non-existence, iii. 505 ; mortal, makes us like demons, iii. 507 ; its forgiveness uncertain, iii. 508 ; its forgiveness a source of humility, iii. 509 ; disquiet after, a sign of pride, iii. 565 ; sorrow for, recommended by St. Chrysostom, iv. 207 ; not willed by God, iv. 236 ; two things implied in, iv. 237 ; the part God takes in, explained, iv. 237, 238.
Singing, vain complacency in, punished, ii. 309.
Singleness not granted in this world, i. 310.
Sinner, behaviour of Director with hardened, i. 126 ; converted by thought of God's presence, i. 280 ; tenderness in treating them, i. 352 ; various classes of, i. 472 ; Mary the mother of, i. 472.
Sins, venial, a hindrance to devotion, iii. 244 ; if wilful, cool charity, iii. 244 ; grievous punishment of, in Old Testament, iii. 287 ; the hideousness of, iii. 511 ; a foundation of humility, iii. 511 ; require continual penance, iv. 205.
Skill, a part of prudence, iii. 12, 15 ; belongs to counsel, iii. 13 ; explained, iii. 15.
Sleep, penance of privation of, ii. 37, *ff.* ; rules for penance affecting, ii. 64.
Smell, sense of, ii. 181, *ff.* ; over-indulgence of the sense punished, ii 182.
Sobieski, anecdote of, ii. 327.
Society, impossible apart from justice, iii. 60.
Socrates, did not attain to knowledge of true chastity, iii. 408 ; meekness of, iv. 330
Solicitude, a fault against prudence, iii. 20.
Solitary, heroic resistance to temptation by a, ii. 26.
Solitary of Egypt, love of chastity in, iii. 397.
Solitude, a help to realise God's presence, i. 300 ; bad for the scrupulous, ii. 425 ; imprudently practised, ruins the soul, iii. 27.
Solomon, his fall, ii. 10 ; his Dedication Feast, iii. 174 ; prayed with uplifted hands, iii. 200.

Sophronia, heroic chastity of, iii 410.
Sorrow must accompany Confession, i. 316, *sq.*; for sin, efficacy of, i. 318; Confession worthless without, i. 320; for sin, how to be secured, i. 340; for sin need not be sensible, i. 340; for sin, doubt of the sufficiency of, ii. 466; for sin, should never cease, iv. 207; effect of, on a public sinner, iv. 208; purifies the soul, iv. 208, 209; joined with love, in the Saints, iv. 209.
Soul and body, must both have a share in our worship, iii. 168, *ff.*
Spark of fire, temptation compared to, ii. 392.
Speech. *See* TONGUE.
Speech, a purely human faculty, ii. 195; immoderate, reproved, ii. 207, 209, 211; the loss of, sometimes a blessing, ii. 213.
Spinola, Blessed, his heroic conformity to the will of God, iv. 293.
Spirit and flesh, their perpetual enmity, ii. 230; in opposition, iii. 242, 243.
Spirit, poverty of, ii. 295.
Spiritual Communion, i. 441, &c.; frequency of, i. 442; method of, i. 443; how rewarded, i. 444. *See* COMMUNION, SPIRITUAL.
Spiritual duties, neglect of, the first symptom of declining desires, i. 81.
Spiritual exercises inculcate the need of direction, i. 104.
Spiritual reading. *See* READING.
Spiritual things must be tried to be appreciated, i. 77.
Spiritual works of mercy, superior to corporal, iv. 357.
Stages of perfection, i. 30.
State of life, liberty of every one to choose, iii. 269.
Stephen, Abbot of Rieti, his love for his neighbour, iv. 335.
Stoics, false teaching of the, iii. 93.
Streets, peculiar need of modesty in the, ii. 141.
Study distinguished from spiritual reading, i. 144; from meditation, i. 153; needful to Directors, iii. 38.
Suarez on perfection, i. 26; his view of the nature of perfection, i. 39; it is morally impossible to keep the commandments neglecting the counsels, i. 56; perfection is a work of time, i. 79; various perfection in various states, i. 79; how he valued meditation, i. 162; on the value of spiritual consolations, iii. 232.
Substance of poverty. *See* POVERTY.
Success, hope of, necessary in every action, iv. 33.
Suffering, best preparation for, i. 178.
Sufferings of this life, short, iii. 354; no one free from, iii. 359; their necessity, iii. 359; a kind of martyrdom, iv. 25; with hope, a source of consolation, iv. 102; relieved by hope, iv. 104, 105; must always be accompanied by hope, iv. 120; a pledge of eternal life, iv. 121; should be rendered light by love of God, iv. 176; patience under, a test of true love of God, iv. 217; examples of patience in, iv. 218; come from God, iv. 237, *ff.*; causes of, twofold, iv. 240; acknowledged by David as coming from God, iv. 240; reasons why sent by God, iv. 255, *ff.*; intended for our good, iv. 255; sent for our temporal advantage, iv. 256; sent for our spiritual welfare, iv. 257, 258; in this life, free us from those of the next, iv. 257; examples from Scripture of the good effects of, iv. 258-261; advantage of, considered in Dives and Lazarus, iv. 263.
Suggestions. *See* PRACTICAL.
Suicide, Monk led to, i. 103; the result of sadness, iii. 337.
Supererogation, works of. *See* COUNSELS.
Superfluities, privation of, ii. 293.
Superiors, assisted by God in directing, iii. 304; God's representatives, and as such to be obeyed, iii. 313, *ff.*; should not impose commands beyond the natural strength of their subjects, iii. 323; should not punish when in anger, iii. 489
Surius, anecdote related by, illustrating the necessity of restitution, iii. 80; on the great abstinence of St. Hedwige, iii. 150; relates the martyrdom of Celsus and Julian, iv. 109; his life of St. Chrysostom quoted, iv. 385.
Surprise, enhances evils, iii. 105, 109.
Susanna, her courage founded on the sense of God's presence, i. 286; her recourse to God in suffering, iii. 382.
Suso, vision of the nine rocks, i. 57; his great penance, ii. 36.
Sylvanus, Abbot, anecdote of, iii. 296.
Symmachus, Pope, anecdote concerning his election, iii. 36.
Symptoms of declining desires, i. 81, *sq.*

Talkativeness, an effect of gluttony, ii. 79.
Taste. *See* GLUTTONY.
Taste, as a hindrance to perfection, ii. 68, &c.; means to control, ii. 87, 100; sense of, not subject to the control of the will, iii. 142.
Telonarius, Peter, sanctified through almsgiving, iv. 288.
Temperaments, to be noticed by Directors, iii. 41, *ff.*; four in number, iii. 42; correspond to the four elements, iii. 42; melancholic, explained, iii. 42; phlegmatic, explained, iii. 43; sanguine, explained, iii. 44; bilious, explained, iii. 45.
Temperance as a remedy against gluttony, ii. 100, *sq.*; belongs to such as live in community, ii. 115; perfect when subject to no earthly desire, iii. 3; a cardinal virtue, iii. 86; wider and stricter sense of, iii. 124; of the Fathers of the Desert, iii. 129; makes us like the Angels, iii. 135; disposes to all the virtues and graces, iii. 140; highly esteemed by all the Saints, iii. 140; perfects reason, iii. 140; described by St. Prosper, iii. 141; its precise nature, iii. 142, *ff.*; how consistent with mortification, iii. 146; extends to all the senses, iii. 149, 153; practical suggestions concerning, iii. 150-156.
Temporal blessings as objects of prayer, i. 227; an object of hope, iv. 70; should be prayed for conditionally iv. 71; their

danger, iv. 71; neglected by the Saints, iv. 71; acquired by natural hope, iv. 98.
Temporal cares, iii. 22.
Temptations, of Adam, and of Christ, i. 72; must be disclosed to Director, i. 116; to believe that God has forsaken us, i. 189; in time of prayer, i. 192, *sq.*; prayer a duty in time of, i. 217; should be mentioned in confession, i. 328; from devils, great hindrances to perfection, i. 462; the Blessed Virgin Mary protects us from, i. 463; instance of heroic resistance to, ii. 26; to gluttony, ii. 86; to forestall meals, how overcome, ii. 102; suited by the devil to various occasions, ii. 204; weak in their beginnings, ii. 242; outward and diabolical, ii. 367, *sq.*; a proof of God's love, ii. 369; will never wholly cease, ii. 372; of the devil, their uses, ii. 375, *ff.*; merit gained by repelling, ii. 385, *ff.*; chastisements which God's love sends us, ii. 388; diabolic, means to overcome them, ii. 390, *ff.*; to be rejected without delay, ii. 390, *sq.*; like a spark of fire, ii. 392; resisted by prayer, ii. 394, *ff.*; banished by Sign of the Cross, ii. 397; confidence in God, a help against, ii. 399, *ff.*; openness with Director a help against, ii. 404, *ff.*; helped by occasions of sin, ii. 406; practical suggestions concerning, ii. 407, *ff.*; are supplied by the devil, suited to different tastes, ii. 408; different modes of meeting, according to their different natures, ii. 409; under appearance of good, ii. 414; to apparent good, means to discover, ii. 417; must not make us give up our ordinary exercises, ii. 419; their effect on men possessed of divine faith, iv. 51; against faith, are no sign of its loss, iv. 55; strengthens virtue, iv. 55; against faith, to be examined in their origin, iv. 57; against faith, how to act during, iv. 58, 59; are necessary in this life, iv. 59; best overcome by divine hope, iv. 117; when disguised, prove most dangerous, iv. 123.
Temptations. *See* DEVIL.
Tempting God, folly of, i. 98.
Tepidity succeeding fervour, i. 37; its danger illustrated, i. 47; and aridity distinguished, i. 83; often arises from vanity, i. 85; dangers and cures of, i. 86, *sq.*; cures for, i. 89; cured by one meditation, i. 157; punished by deprivation of Communion, i. 388.
Teresa, S., on the beginning of spiritual life, i. 80; indiscreet requirements of her Director, i. 80; on qualities of a good Director, i. 110, 112; commends the presence of God, i. 289, 294; her care not to encourage detraction, ii. 178; her exact poverty, ii. 293; and St. Peter of Alcantara, their friendship, ii. 349; her vision, showing the danger of imperfect attachments, ii. 356; how cured of an inordinate attachment, ii. 363; her heroic obedience to her Director, ii. 443; her mortification of taste, iii. 153; her fidelity during desolation, iii. 228; her difficulty in parting from her parents, iii. 230; her good will, iii. 230; on sensible devotion, iii. 241; her obedience to her Confessor, iii. 318, 329; misunderstood by one of her confessors, iii. 336; her patience in desolation, iii. 373; on true humility, iii. 566; her preference for the sublimer mysteries of faith, iv. 37; her great zeal for souls, iv. 209; on suffering for God, iv. 214-218; her compact of love, iv. 228.
Tertullian, on the zeal of the early Christians for martyrdom, iii. 91; on standing during prayer, iii. 197; on the hope of reward, iii. 355; on the want of real modesty in pagan women, iii. 409.
Thaïs, her conversion, i. 281.
Thanksgiving, ejaculations expressing, i. 296; the first act of examination of conscience, i. 369; in Spiritual Communion, i. 443.
Thauler, anecdote related by, iv. 274.
Theatres of the ancients, ii. 5, 6.
Theft less heinous than detraction, ii. 171.
Theobald, Count, his heroic charity, iv. 347.
Theodora of Antioch, her martyrdom, i. 17.
Theodoret, anecdote related by, iv. 46.
Theodosius, conversion of two of his courtiers, i. 140; anecdote of, ii. 312; his ready obedience, iii. 267; an example of clemency, iii. 448; forbids those condemned to death to be executed till after thirty days, iii. 490.
Theopentus, Monk, anecdote of, iii. 292.
Thomas, St., on the perfection of this world, and of heaven, i. 11; on the stages of love of God, i. 25; definition of perfection, i. 32; on essential and accidental perfection, i. 20; desires of perfection, i. 44; obligation of Religious to seek perfection, i. 49; breaches of religious rule, i. 51; obligation of seculars to seek perfection, i. 52; meditation a necessary means to devotion, i. 159; on distractions in prayer, i. 181; absolute necessity of prayer, i. 214; conditions of prayer, i. 245; attention in prayer, i. 260; on distraction in prayer, i. 263; on sins forgotten in confession, i. 332; Communion a principal means to perfection, i. 391; Communion compared to food, its four effects, i. 397, *sq.*; on the frequency of Communion, i. 425; on the use of Communion, i. 428; on the prayers of sinners, i. 473; on the dangers of touch, ii. 9; on the measure of penance, ii. 52; on the provinces of temperance and fasting, ii. 115; his classification of the passions, ii. 219; honour and glory distinguished, ii. 298; on the capital sins, ii. 310; on the distinction between the moral virtues, iii. 3; on the nature of heroic virtue, iii. 7; his doctrine of faults against prudence, iii. 20; definition of justice, iii. 49; on the nature of fortitude, iii. 88; on the function of passion in assisting reason, iii. 93; on the nature of temperance, iii. 142, *ff.*; on the virtue of religion, iii. 158; on the nature of devotion, iii. 209, 213; why humility begets devotion, iii. 220; on the definition and object of obedience, iii. 261, 262; on the necessity of obedience, iii. 272; on the excellence of obedience, iii. 276; on the inferiority of that obedience which accords-

with our inclination, iii. 297; on virtuous vengeance, iii. 334; on the nature of patience, iii. 335; on the evil effects of sadness, iii. 337; on the integral parts of fortitude, iii. 381; on the necessity of chastity, iii. 387; on the dignity of continence in a married life, iii. 443; on meekness and patience, iii. 444; on the effect of anger on the mind, iii. 450; on humility, and what should proceed from it, iii. 498; on the nature of humility towards men, iii. 526; on the great dignity of humility, iii. 550; that humility is the foundation of all virtue, iii. 553; his definition of theological faith, iv. 4; teaches that despair is the most damning of all sins, iv. 125; explains the dependence of all virtues upon that of theological charity, iv. 148; on interior repentance, iv. 205; on fraternal correction, iv. 364.
Thomas à Kempis, anecdote of, i. 268.
Thorns, riches compared to, ii. 259.
Tiburtius, St., heroic fortitude of, iii. 106.
Time of food to be fixed, ii. 101, *sq.*
Tobias, proved by suffering, iii. 344.
Tongue. *See* SPEECH.
Tongue as the organ of speech, ii. 195, &c.; hard to bridle, ii. 196, *sq.*; ordinary faults of, ii. 199, 203; compared to an unruly horse, ii. 200; means to bridle, ii. 201, *sq.*; resolution to keep guard over, ii. 205, *sq.*; curbed by silence, ii. 208, *sq.*; practical suggestions on the guard of, ii. 213, *sq.*; meditation as a help to cure its faults, ii. 214; to be curbed by penances, ii. 215.
Tonsure, renewal of, its mystic meaning, i. 336.
Touch, as a hindrance to perfection, ii. 4, *ff.*; the most dangerous of the senses, ii. 4; why, ii. 7; remedies against, excesses in the use of, ii. 12, *ff.*; examples of caution in the use of, ii. 13, *ff.*; the foundation of the other senses, ii. 15; of self, warning against, ii. 18; rendered harmless by penance, ii. 29; sense of, not subject to the control of the will, iii. 142.
Tradesmen retaining sense of presence of God, i. 301.
Trajan, Emperor, anecdote of, iii. 54.
Trent, Council of, defines the absolute necessity of grace, i. 215; on the advantages of ritual, iii. 169.
Trials lessened if foreseen, i. 176.
Trials. *See* SUFFERING, ADVERSITY.
Tribulation. *See* ADVERSITY.
Trinitarians, heresy of, iii. 168.
Trinity Sunday, iv. 291.
Trithemius, quoted, iii. 296.
Trouble, a hindrance to devotion, iii. 251.
Truths of divine faith, should be maintained with our lives, iv. 14.

Understanding, daily examination of our, i. 357.
Unitive way, i. 31; meditations suitable for, i. 199.
Utility of vocal prayer, i. 257.
Uviligisus, Archbishop of Mayence, on the foundation of humility, iii. 501.
Valentinian, his self-denial, ii. 255.
Vainglory. *See* VANITY.
Vainglory may arise from frequent Communion, i. 438; vainglory, ii. 271; sin of, ii. 301; how opposed to perfection, ii. 307, &c.; vices accompanying, ii. 310, &c.; eminent examples of shunning, ii. 312, 316, *sq.*; why so hard to conquer, ii. 313, 314; has no opposite virtue, ii. 313; remedies against, ii. 319, *sq.*, 326, *sq.*; folly of, ii. 321; practical suggestions concerning, ii. 332-8; fear of, no ground to omit good works, ii. 336; often takes the disguise of humility, ii. 337, *sq.*
Vanderflue, Nicholas, his long fast, i. 399.
Vanity. *See* VAINGLORY.
Vanity, a usual cause of tepidity, i. 85; in dress, ii. 156; of a good singer rebuked, ii. 309; checked by concealing our gifts, ii. 328, *sq.*; of women in dress, ii. 334; temptation to, how met, ii. 409; a different vice from pride, iii. 497.
Vasquez, Gonsalvez, strengthened to endure martyrdom by the thought of the Passion of Christ, iii. 113.
Vengeance, virtuous, explained, iii. 334; a potential part of justice, iii. 334; conditions of, iii. 334.
Venial sin. *See* SIN.
Venus, inscription on her statue, ii. 121.
Veronica, Blessed, her great penance, ii. 36; how God showed His will that she should fast, ii. 66.
Vices opposed to prudence, iii. 10-23; opposed to temperance, iii. 131-141.
Victor, St., Hugh of, on the sources of devotion, iii. 215.
Victor, St., Richard of, on sensible devotion, iii. 232.
Vienna, anecdote of the siege of, ii. 327.
Vienne, Council of, condemns the Begnards and Beguines, i. 10.
Villanova, Thomas of, St., his charity to the poor, iv. 350.
Vincent, Ferrer, St., on necessity of direction, i. 99; his public self-flagellation, ii. 44; anecdote of, ii. 213.
Vincent, the martyr, heroic fortitude of, iii. 106.
Vindictive justice. *See* JUSTICE.
Vine-dresser, image taken from, i. 360.
Virginity. *See* CHASTITY.
Virtue, solid, imitated by transient grace, i. 37; needed in Director, i. 106, 110; need of examination for growth in, i. 364; strengthened by temptation, ii. 378.
Virtues, moral, constitute Christian perfection, i. 18; importance of, i. 22; how they promote perfection, i. 23; are the immediate disposition to perfection, iii. 1, 2; in what their perfection consists, iii. 3; all belong to same species, yet have different qualities, iii. 3; purifying, exercised in opposing vices, iii. 3; of purified soul, free from movements of passions, iii. 3; in their strict sense, found only in Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin, iii. 4; and in Heaven in the saved, iii. 4; in a wide sense, possessed by those who have made great progress in perfection, iii. 4; never absolutely

perfect on earth, iii. 4; what perfection is possible in them, iii. 5; cannot exist alone, iii. 6; heroism in, iii. 6, *ff.*; consists in a mean, iii. 25; which are the most necessary, iii 27; internal and external, their different characters, iii. 46; Cardinal, why so called, iii. 85; excellence of, known by contrast with vice, iii. 131; Theological and Moral, iii. 160; must be interior, iii. 165; must be accompanied with outward acts, iii. 168; should excite humility, iii. 516; impossible without humility, iii. 533, 556; Theological, their intimate connection, iv. 2; acquired by frequent acts, iv. 36; practice of, must be regulated by faith, iv. 54; rendered meritorious by faith, iv. 54; strengthened by resistance to temptation, iv. 55; acquirement of, an object of hope, iv. 69; cannot exist without charity, iv. 144, 145; return with charity, iv. 146; their growth is measured by charity, iv. 148.
Virtues. *See* MORAL VIRTUES.
Visits to Our Lady recommended, i. 475.
Vision of Abbot Macarius, showing the nature of distractions in prayer, i. 183; showing God's different dealings with different souls, i. 190.
Vocal prayer. *See* PRAYER.
Vocal prayer, i. 255, *sq.*
Voice, tone of, to be regulated by modesty, ii. 142.
Voluntary distractions in prayer, i. 182.
Vows the means by which Religious seek perfection, i. 50; power to commute, iii. 74; as acts of religion, iii. 191; require deliberation, iii. 208.

Want of modesty a sure sign of ill-regulated interior, ii. 139.
Wariness, belongs to the executive command, iii. 12; a part of prudence, iii. 12, 17.
Warning against freedom in touching, ii. 17.
Ways, purgative, illuminative, unitive, i. 31; three, practical suggestions concerning, i. 37-42.
Weariness no cause to abandon meditation, i. 198; in Confessors, i. 350.
Weeds, daily sins compared to, i. 360.
Whit-Sunday, iv. 288, 329; Whit-Monday, iv. 289, 290; Whit-Tuesday, iv. 290.
Will moved by objects as presented by the intellect, i. 155; readiness of, constitutes devotion, i. 158; constrained acts of, may be pleasing to God, i. 211; daily examination of our, i. 357; incapable of itself of an act of hope, iv. 63.
William, St., how he received the Holy Viaticum, i. 415.
Wine, use of, ii. 104; St. Bernard's use of, iii. 128.
Wire, instruments of penance of, ii. 35.
Wisdom of Doctors of the Church, a motive of credibility, iv. 8.
Wolf, sense of justice in, iii. 71.
Women, how to be dealt with by Directors, i. 129; Confessions of, i. 329; dress of, ii. 156; their true ornaments, ii. 157; the tongues of, require a peculiar guard, ii. 213; ought to use their opportunities of silence, ii. 218; vanity of, ii. 334; swayed by love, ii. 361; their peculiar need of fortitude, iii. 123; great virtue of those who give up vanity in dress, iii. 545.
Word of God, is food to the soul, iv. 381.
Words, attention to, in prayer, i. 260; sin of, ii. 79; *living*, ii. 363.
Work, plan of the, i. 28.
Worldlings, more energetic than good men, iv. 187.
Worldly cares, a hindrance to devotion, iii. 245.
Worship, nature of, iii. 165-173; different kinds of, iii. 173; acts of, iii. 174, *ff.*; connection of inward and outward, iii. 177; examples of, iii. 178; outward acts of, help prayer, iii. 195; public and private, iii. 196; external forms of, iii. 197, *ff.*; frivolous conduct of some women during, iii. 205, *ff.*
Worship of God should employ all our powers, i. 257.

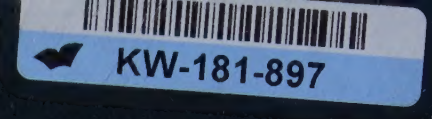
Ximenes, Brother John, anecdote of, i. 176.

Young persons, their peculiar need of custody of eyes, ii. 151.

Zacheus, model of a converted covetous man, iii. 82.
Zeal lightens the labour of Confessors, i. 353; detraction aping, ii. 191; origin of, iv. 194; of apostolic men, iv. 197; must manifest itself, iv. 198; should be discreet, iv. 200; of some holy monks, iv. 202, *ff.*; for souls, pleasing to God, iv. 358-361; for souls, as seen in St. Ignatius of Loyola, iv. 362; makes up for want of learning in a priest, iv. 383.
Zeleucus, king, anecdote of, iii. 55.

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST VOLUME.

R. AND T. WASHBOURNE, LTD., 1, 2 & 4 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.


KW-181-897